

THE WAY THEY HAVE" BY 'BARTIMEUS'
FINE NEW STORY

The QUIVER

February
1918



BEECHAM'S PILLS

The verdict of the people—the unchangeable opinion of the majority, who have found that their health is improved and maintained by taking Beecham's Pills—is in favour of that medicine as the Common Sense Remedy for dyspepsia, biliousness, constipation and derangements of the digestive system in general. There is no disputing the great value of Beecham's Pills—

WORTH A GUINEA A BOX.



Per. 1419 d. 95

"Beautifully Cool and Sweet Smoking."

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT TOBACCO

Packed in varying degrees of strength
to suit every class of smoker.

Player's Gold Leaf Navy Cut -	PER OZ. D. 8 1/2
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Also **PLAYER'S NAVY CUT DE LUXE** a development
of Player's Navy Cut, packed in 2-oz. and 4-oz.
airtight tins at 1/9 and 3/6 respectively.



This Tobacco is also supplied at
Duty Free Rates for the purpose of
gratuitous distribution to wounded
Soldiers and Sailors in Hospital.

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TO
PHILLIPS, MILLS & CO.,
Ltd.,
Battersea, S.W.11.**

Price List free on application. Telephone: 2270 Battersea (4 lines)

DIABETES

Write for Samples and Booklet and enclose 6 stamps for postage.
CHELTENHAM FOODS CO., CHELTENHAM
FLOUR, BISCUITS, BREAD, FOOD, ETC.

Highly Recommended by Medical Profession.

HAVE YOU A DOG?

Through the means of the "QUIVER" DOG POWDERS can always be kept in the peak of condition, healthy, hearty, full of life, free from all Skin Diseases and other complaints, and also from the most objectionable ills due to the presence of **WORMS**. Use these Powders with the utmost confidence, they are recommended by over one of the best-known and most successful Dog Breeders in the World. **1/- post free 12**, from **F. H. PROSSER & CO., Ltd., Veterinary Chemists, Spring Hill, BIRMINGHAM**, or through any Chemist, Corn Dealer, or Stores.



After a Good Walk

the wearer of Wood-Milnes can show an even pair of heels. The shoes will still look smart—the brisk motion will not have strained the "uppers."

And the Wood-Milne wearer feels quite bright—the resilient rubber heels have lessened the jolts and jars of walking—given her step a light and buoyant feeling—made the roads feel soft as velvet.

To save your shoes from wear—yourself from fatigue—buy from your Bootman to-day a pair of

Wood-Milne

RUBBER HEELS or TIPS

Made of Black, Brown, or Grey Rubber in shapes and sizes to fit all footwear. No increase in price.

See the name Wood-Milne on every pair.

R 443



TABLET FORM

Large Flask 2s 6d
Small Flask 1s 3d



AN ACID STOMACH

is the underlying cause of practically all forms of digestive and stomach trouble:

Indigestion,	— Dyspepsia,
Heartburn,	— Flatulence,
Inflammation,	— Ulceration,
Gastric Catarrh,	— Gastritis,
Waterbrash,	— Acidity, Wind, etc.

This has been demonstrated over and over again by many eminent specialists, who aver that a simple antacid and food corrective known as

BISURATED MAGNESIA

constitutes the only really effective remedy.

If you suffer from any form of digestive or stomach trouble you should certainly give Bisurated Magnesia a trial. It will neutralise the harmful acid which is causing your trouble, dispel the wind, soothe, comfort, and heal your inflamed stomach, and ensure normal digestion. As a result your health will benefit in many ways.

GUARANTEE.—Bisurated Magnesia is curing over ninety per cent. of all the cases of stomach trouble in which it is used. We believe it will cure you—no matter how long you have suffered, and if it fails for any reason we will refund your money and the trial will have cost you nothing. This unqualified promise is confirmed by the

SATISFACTION OR MONEY BACK
guarantee coupon which is enclosed in every package of genuine

BISURATED MAGNESIA,
The Antacid that Cures
Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Gastritis, Wind,
etc.

**Bisurated
magnesia**

Regd

Genuine Bisurated Magnesia can now be obtained of high-class chemists everywhere, or post-free from the manufacturers : **BISMAG, LTD.**,
7, Wybert St., MUNSTER Sq., London, N.W.

BANISH YOUR GREY HAIR

Free Distribution of 1,000,000 "Astol" Outfits

London Hair Specialist's Discovery that Restores Lost Natural Colour to Hair that is Grey or Faded.

Public Invitation to Write To-day for Free Trial Outfit, containing:

1. A Free Bottle of ASTOL, the new scientific preparation that literally forces the natural colouring cells of the hair to new healthy activity.
2. A Packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, the splendid hair and scalp cleanser, which prepares the hair for the application of ASTOL.
3. A Copy of the famous Instruction Book "Good News for the Grev-Haired," in the pages of which the use of ASTOL is clearly explained so that you have no trouble, difficulty, or doubt as to exactly how to use the Free Test Supply.

THE above Gift is yours to-day merely for the asking. It is a valuable "Back-to-Youth" present for all who are grey-haired already, or just beginning to go grey. It makes you look years younger, and enhances your prospects of success in all walks of life.

Although a comparatively new discovery, "Astol" is already known to and has been used by millions of grey-haired men and women. Its immediate success is due to various causes.

1. "Astol" is the discovery of the well-known London hair specialist who introduce the now world-famed "Harlene Hair-Drill," in itself a powerful recommendation and guarantee.

2. It is neither a dye nor a stain, both of which are rightly held in abhorrence by every man and woman of refined and sensitive temperament. Dyes and stains are messy and ineffective, and their use is easily detected.

3. It is physiological in its action, and does not merely paint the hair shaft. It has a powerful action on enfeebled and atrophied colouring cells, and restores their youthful vigour and healthy functional activity.

4. "Astol" is itself an absolutely clear and colourless liquid, supplied in dainty bottles. It does not give temporarily a FALSE colour to the hair but merely brings back its NATURAL colour and lustre.

HOW GREY HAIR HANDICAPS.

These are very real and potent reasons for the triumph of "Astol" over old-fashioned and "messy" stains, dyes, and tints, and must at once make a strong appeal to every intelligent man and woman.

No man or woman can see their hair going grey without a pang. The appearance of grey hair too often sounds the death-knell of many hopes, aspirations, and ambitions. Whether it arise from shock, sickness, fright, anxiety, or the natural passing of the years, it is a cause for regret, and in these strenuous, modern days may almost be said to carry a stigma. At any rate, it is often a bar to social, professional, and commercial success.

If you are troubled with any of these signs:

Patchy Greyness. White Hair, Temple Greyness, Streaky Greyness, Greyness over the Ears, recent or long-standing Greyness, lose no time in sending for your Trial Supply of "Astol" now offered.

No matter from whatever cause the greyness may arise, "Astol" will quickly and permanently banish it. The proprietors possess thousands of grateful letters bearing testimony to this, but for obvious reasons it would be a distinct breach of confidence and etiquette to publish any such letters. The "Astol" treatment for grey hair can be carried out without any other person being aware of the fact. Guard yourself against the ageing appearance of grey hair by the daily use of "Astol" and its invaluable companion, "Cremex" shampoo.

APPLY FOR FREE TRIAL OUTFIT TO-DAY.



No one need hesitate about using "Astol." It does not colour the hair; it makes the hair regrow its own natural colour. You can put it to the test yourself without expense. Post the Free Gift Coupon to-day.

After you have once seen for yourself the effect of "Astol" you can obtain further supplies from any chemist the world over at 1s. and 1s. per bottle; "Cremex," 1s. 1d. per box of seven packets (single packets 2d each), or direct post free on remittance from Edward's Harlene, Ltd., 20, 22, 24 and 26 Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.1. Carriage extra on foreign orders. Cheques and P.O.'s should be crossed.

FREE GIFT "ASTOL" COUPON

Cut out and post to EDWARDS' HARLENE, LTD., 20, 22, 24 and 26 Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.1.

Dear Sirs.—Please send me a Free Trial Supply of "Astol" and packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, with full instructions. Enclose 1d stamps for postage and packing to my address.

NOTE TO READER :

Write your full name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this Coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope Sample Dept.)

QUIVER, Feb., 1918.

JEWSBURY & BROWN'S
Oriental
Tooth Paste

Tubes 1/- Pots 1/- 2/-

BIMBO

THE MAGIC DRY

Window and Mirror Cleaner

MAGICAL ALSO

For PAINTWORK, MARBLE,
LAVATORY BASINS, BATHS,
LAMP CHIMNEYS, etc.

6d. per tin. Postage ad. extra.

May be obtained of all Ironmongers,
Stores, etc., or write to

ELBARD PATENTS CO.
(Dept. G.), 40 York Road, King's
Cross, London, N.1.

Foster Clark's

You simply add water

2d. Soups

"I FEEL SO WILD!"

"I feel so wild with Connie! I saw her in the train and told her of the trouble I have with my hair—that it is falling out and going grey, and I am only a young woman yet. She told me hers was going just the same, but now it is quite cured and restored, and simply lovely, but the horrid girl wouldn't tell me what had worked the miracle."



ASK YOUR HAIRRESSER OR CHEMIST FOR DR. WILSON'S HAIR RESTORER
Or write to PARTON, SON & CO., LTD., BULLRING, BIRMINGHAM

THE PELMANOMETER

WHAT DOES
YOUR BRAIN
EARN?
for you.



£1000
A YEAR
£750
A YEAR
£500
A YEAR
£400
A YEAR

HAVE YOU EVER PROPERLY
REALISED THE FACT THAT
IN YOUR BRAIN YOU POSSESS THE
FINEST MONEY-MAKING MACHINE
IN THE WORLD?

There is practically no limit to the income-earning powers of the mind, when it is keyed up to the highest pitch of efficiency of which it is capable.

By training your mind to greater efficiency you can put yourself in the way of earning twice, three times, four times the amount you make at present.

In every profession, business, and occupation, there is a demand for men and women with scientifically trained minds.

Nearly 250,000 men and women have already been trained to greater efficiency by the famous Pelman System, which develops just those qualities of Concentration, Memory, Initiative, Ideation, Self-Confidence and Administrative Power which are in the greatest demand to-day.

There are 15,000 British and Dominion officers and men studying the Course; including 46 Generals, 9 Admirals, and nearly 5,000 regimental officers.

By training your mind on the Pelman System you can do better work (and better paid work) with infinitely less effort. A Course of Pelman Training is the finest of all mental exercises. It develops your mind as physical training develops your muscles. It is most fascinating to follow, and takes up very little time. It is taught by post, and can be followed anywhere.

Write to-day for a Free Copy of

**Mind and
Memory.**

It tells you all about the successful Pelman System, and shows you how to increase the money-making powers of your mind. Send a post card or letter to-day.

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THE ONLY "PIECE" AT ANY PRICE.



Always on Active Service.

Fry's PURE
BREAKFAST **Cocoa**

Contractors to the Allied Forces.

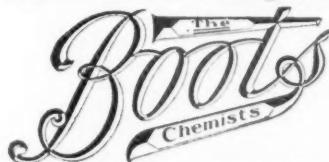
The Sign

of Safety



The Trade Mark of BOOTS The Chemists may well be likened to a 'Sign of Safety,' for it enables you to identify an article of absolute purity, just as the 'Hall Mark' tells you that an article is solid silver—it is a guarantee and a bond of goodwill which you, as a member of the public, hold—it is the security upon which you extend your patronage. Boots The Chemists Trade Mark on a medical or toilet preparation safeguards you against impurity and ensures efficiency. It points the way to economy and satisfaction. It is a visible sign of the faith Boots The Chemists have in their own goods. Purity and economy go hand in hand wherever you see the Trade Mark of Boots The Chemists.

You are safe in dealing with



Chief London Branch: 182 REGENT STREET, W.

Over 100 Branches in London Area.

555 BRANCHES IN
TOWN AND COUNTRY.

Boots Pure Drug Co., Ltd.



TO MAKE YOU FEEL FIT AND WELL
TAKE SALVIS IN THE MORNING

Just half a Teaspoonful in a Tumblerful of water every morning and you will keep in a perfect state of health. Sold in 16 packets at all Boots Chemists Branches, or Post Free for 18 stamps from

THE SALVIS CO.,
10 KING WILLIAM ST., BLACKBURN.
Also from leading Chemists.

SALVIS is the natural remedy for those who suffer from Liver, Kidney, Stomach, and War-bread Disorders, and is especially valuable in cases of Lumbago, Obesity, Sciatica, Neuritis, Gouty Eczema, Indigestion, Chronic Constipation, Gout and

RHEUMATISM



Send a jar to your
boy at the front!
Laitova
Lemon Cheese

The daily spread for the children's bread.

Not only is it more delicious than jam or butter—it is more nutritious, providing just those food elements that make up for the waste of tissue.

And use it in the home instead of butter, it's nicer and more economical.

*In dainty hygienic jars, of
grocers and stores everywhere.*

SUTCLIFFE & BINGHAM, Ltd.,
Cornbrook, Manchester.

N.B. Send a few jars to the boys
at sea—it's a welcome change.

STANWORTHS' "Defiance" REG. UMBRELLAS

• THIS UMBRELLA

photographed before and after repair, is an example of what can be done in the Stanworth workshops.

A complete wreck in the first picture, the second shows the poor "patient" after being repaired and re-covered with the famous Stanworth "Defiance" Silk Union.

Send us your old Umbrella

to-day together with P.O. for 6/-, and it will reach you per return of post, looking as fresh as on the day you first purchased it. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra.

A post card will bring you our Illustrated Catalogue of Stanworth "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for re-covering umbrellas from 7/- upwards.

STANWORTH & CO.,
Northern Umbrella Works,
BLACKBURN.



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If you see the name "**UCAL**" in a Chemist's Window, **WALK RIGHT IN**—it is the mark of the

UNITED CHEMISTS ASSOCIATION LIMITED.

The Largest Combination of BRITISH CHEMISTS in the World.

EVERY "UCAL" PREPARATION IS ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEED.



GOOD-BYE
TO
HEADACHE, COLD IN THE HEAD
TO CATARRH, HAY FEVER,
DIZZINESS OR FAINTNESS

thanks to

Dr. MACKENZIE'S SMELLING BOTTLE.

THE FINEST CURE FOR THESE
DISTRESSING AILMENTS.



Of all Chemists and Stores, 1/3, or post free 1/6 from
DR. MACKENZIE'S LABORATORY, CASTLE ST., READING.
LABORATORIES LTD.

**The British Manufacturers'
Brand that protects you
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STOCKINGS & SOCKS

For Ladies, Children and Men.

When you insist on seeing the Jason Tab on a pair of Hose, you not only secure a guarantee of all-wool construction and unshrinkability — you also obtain protection against inflated prices.

The manufacturers of the premier British Stockings and Socks are determined that the public shall receive full Jason value. Dealers must not make more than the full and fair profit which is fixed by the price printed on the Jason Tab by the manufacturers.

**See the Jason
Tab on every
pair, and pay
only the price
marked on the Tab.**

Jason "Elite" Range, 2/- per pair.
Jason "Leader" Range, 2/3 per pair.
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Jason "Excel" Range, 3/- per pair.
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Jason "Charm" Range, 3/9 per pair.
Jason "Grace" Range, 4/- per pair.
Jason "Choice" Range, 4/3 per pair.
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Buy Jason at the fixed prices. In case of difficulty, write

W. TYLER, SONS & CO., LEICESTER.

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We expedite,
For men are freed
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Fluxite is used in the manufacture of Munitions of War because, by saving labour, it frees men for other military duties. Fluxite is known the world over as the paste flux that simplifies soldering. By its aid even dirty metals can be soldered without cleaning, and it does not corrode.

In the home there are from time to time metal articles to be repaired which at present you may not be able to get done for you. Fluxite will assist you to do these yourself; not by merely "sticking," but by the correct mechanical method—soldering. All mechanics and other practical men use Fluxite. It can be obtained of the Ironmongers in tins, 8d., 1s. 4d., and 2s. 8d.

AUTO-CONTROLLER CO., 228 Vienna Road, Bermondsey, Eng.

Simplifies Soldering

YOU CAN PLAY THE PIANO TO-DAY

By Naunton's National Music System



IT makes no difference whether you have had previous lessons or not, whether you are 80 years of age or only 8, we guarantee that you can play the piano to-day by this wonderful and simple system. There are no sharps, flats, or theoretical difficulties to worry you, and no tiresome or wearisome exercises or scales to be learnt. You play correctly with both hands at once. No difficulty or drudgery whatever.

FAILURE IS IMPOSSIBLE

"You cannot fail." All you have to do is to sit down to the piano with our music and play it at once—Hymns, Dance Music, Songs, Classics, anything. **OVER 50,000 PEOPLE ARE PLAYING BY IT, AND ARE PLAYING PERFECTLY.** If they can do it so can you. If you are one of the thousands who have tried and failed, have given up learning by the old methods owing to the difficulties, or if you are afraid to begin because of the drudgery, let us tell you all about this wonderful, simple, rapid and perfect system, which is a real educator. The word "educator" means "to lead out" or "to draw out." It does not

mean "to cram in." Our system draws out the musical powers of our students from the very first lesson. Take advantage of the offer we make on the coupon below, and by return of post you will receive five tunes, which we guarantee you can play; thus you can prove for yourself the simplicity of our system and the accuracy of our statements. This small outlay will open up the delights of the vast realm of music to you and give you many years of purest pleasure. **No one need ever say again, "I wish I could play"; everyone can do it, to-day.**

SPECIAL TRIAL OFFER COUPON

To the Manager, Naunton's National Music System, Memorial Hall, Farrington Street, London, E.C.

Quiver.

Being a reader of THE QUIVER and desiring to test your system, I send herewith postal order for ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE, in return for which please send me your "Special No. 1," published at 2s., containing five tunes, with instructions how I can play them at the first sitting, also your special booklet and particulars of how I can become a thorough musician.

NOTE.—Please fill in Postal Order payable to Naunton's National Music System, Ltd.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

DATE.....

STOMACH AND LIVER TROUBLES

PAINS AFTER
EATING

FLATULENCE

BILIOUSNESS

HEADACHES

CONSTIPATION

INDIGESTION

By its gentle but efficient tonic action on the stomach, liver and bowels, Mother Seigel's Syrup puts these organs of digestion in a state of healthy activity; as a result you are then able to digest what you eat, and thus secure fresh stores of strength and vitality. Such is the experience of thousands of grateful users of this world-famous remedy, who testify that by its occasional use they now enjoy freedom from such distressing troubles as pains after eating, flatulence, biliousness, headache, constipation.

Put it to the test for yourself to-day.

MOTHER

SEIGEL'S SYRUP

HEALTHY WOMEN

must wear "healthy" Corsets, and the "Natural Ease" Corset is the most healthy of all. Every wearer says so. While moulding the figure to the most delicate lines of feminine grace they vastly improve the health.

THE CORSET OF HEALTH



The Natural Ease Corset Style 2.

7/11 pair

Postage abroad extra.

Complete with
Special Detachable
Suspenders.

Stocked in
all sizes
from 20 to 30.
Made in finest
quality Drill.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST.

No bones or steels to drag, hurt, or break.
No lacing at the back.

Made of strong, durable drill of finest quality,
with corded supports and special suspenders,
detachable for washing.

It is laced at the sides with elastic cord to
expand freely when breathing.

It is fitted with adjustable shoulder straps.

It has a short (9 inch) busk in front which
ensures a perfect shape, and is fastened at
the top and bottom with non-rusting Hooks
and Eyes.

It can be easily washed at home, having
nothing to rust or tarnish.

Wear the "NATURAL EASE" Corset and free yourself from Indigestion, Constipation, and scores of other ailments so distressful to Women.

These Corsets are specially recommended for ladies who enjoy cycling, tennis, dancing, golf, etc., as there is nothing to hurt or break. Singers, Actresses, and Invalids will find wonderful assistance, as they enable them to breathe with perfect freedom. All women, especially housewives, and those employed in occupations demanding constant movement, appreciate the "Natural Ease" Corsets. They yield freely to every movement of the body, and whilst giving beauty of figure are the most comfortable Corsets ever worn.

SEND FOR YOURS TO-DAY.

No goods sent without cash, but money
willingly refunded if dissatisfied.
Make your Postal Order payable to

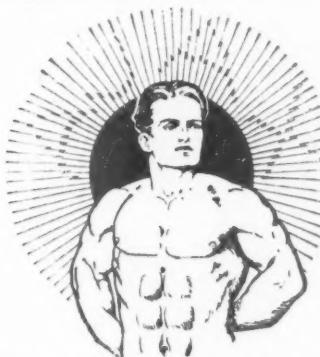
**HEALTH SUPPLIES STORES, Room 99,
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THE GREAT HEALER

Nature's Mysterious Force Performing New Wonders.

Take electricity if you want to get well. It's a lot easier to take than drugs, and it cures where drugs don't. People used to think that the right way to cure pain or illness of any kind was to swallow a lot of drugs. That was just a habit. Now almost everyone knows that drugs are only poison. To cure anything you must help Nature. Drugs don't do that. Nature will cure when she has the power. That power is electricity. Drugs work against Nature.



You take a drug to stop a pain, and it can only stop it by stupefying the nerves. When the stupor passes off, the pain comes back, and you have to take the drug again. Every dose weakens your nerve. If your stomach fails to work properly, from lack of strength, you force it to act by powerful stimulants that ruin your stomach in a short time. The same applies to all other organs.

Electricity gives nourishment, strength to your body. If your stomach is weak, give it electricity, which will enable it to do its work properly. If you have a pain remove it for ever by giving electricity to the part that causes the pain. If your nerves are weak, give them electricity, which is nerve food, nerve life. No pain or weakness can resist electricity.

The "Ajax" battery does this. It saturates the nerves with electric life, and they carry the force to every organ and tissue of the body, giving health and strength to every part. It is a body battery (not an electric belt), and never needs charging, for it makes its own power.

WE GIVE IT FREE

Get our 80-page illustrated book, which tells in plain language many things you want to know and gives a lot of good, wholesome advice for men. Call for a free test if you can, or we'll post you the book at once, free, together with full information concerning the treatment. So write now, at once, if you cannot call for a free test.

AJAX LTD

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DON'T WEAR A TRUSS!



Brooks' Appliance is a new scientific discovery with automatic air cushions that draws the broken parts together, and binds them as you would a broken limb. It absolutely holds firmly and comfortably, and conforms to every movement of the body without chafing or hurting. We make it to your measure, and send it to you on a strict guarantee of satisfaction or money back. And we guarantee you will never see below that anybody, rich or poor, can buy it. Remember, we make it to your order—send it to you—you wear it—and if it doesn't satisfy you, you send it back to us, and we will refund you the money. That is the way we do business—absolutely honest, and we have sold it to thousands of people this way for the past ten years. Remember, we use no salves. We just give you a straight business deal at a reasonable price. Write at once for our illustrated booklet.

BROOKS APPLIANCE CO., Ltd., 638B Kingsway House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

For cleaning Silver. Electro Plate &c.

Goddard's Plate Powder

Sold everywhere 6d 1/- 2/- & 4/-.

500 HOURS LIGHT 1/-



Designed to give a safe and clear light. Last right for new lighting regulations. The

EVERLASTING LAMP

Holds no gas, oil, and can be thrown about without danger. The wick is everlasting, **never needs** renewing. Immediately goes out if knocked over, cannot explode. Price 4d., post rd., 2d. post ad. Stamp accepted, 3d. preferred. Send stamp for a sample, and used instead of matches. Send for illustrated *uncommon Novelty List*, post free. Agents wanted 1d. stamp.

VAUGHAN & HEATHER (Dept. 28),
Gloster Place, BRIGHTON.

Darn No More



Wear our Holeproof Hose as hard as you like, and if a hole develops within TWO months of purchase we will replace them

FREE.

Stockings and Socks that don't Want Mending.

2 pairs Stockings ..	3 10 post 2d.
2 pairs Socks ..	2 10 post 2d.
Milk Hole proof (Guaranteed to last)	
2 pairs Silk Stockings ..	10 0 post 2d.
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Throw away your darning basket with its everlasting worry and eyestrain. A dated guarantee ticket with each pair.

Vaughan & Heather, Ltd. (Dept. 28), Gloster Place, Brighton.

Indigestion

eventually means Headaches—Dizziness
Depression—"Nerves"—Loss of Appetite, etc.

INDIGESTION in itself is a dreadful ailment—but in its train come the hundred and one attendant ills which oppress the lives of so many people at the present time.

The whole of the digestive system is dependent upon the bowels, and if at any time you experience the above symptoms, you may be sure that to some extent you are affected by Constipation.

For all cases of Constipation there is nothing better, safer, or surer than

Chocoloids. These little chocolate-coated tablets bring wonderful relief—no matter whether the case is mild or severe—and being entirely herbal in composition, they are not hurtful to delicate constitutions.

Sparkling eyes, clear skin, healthy appetite, and an abundance of good spirits are life's gift to those with pure blood. Purify your blood and experience the joy of living by taking Chocoloids.



Chocoloids

The Cure for Constipation

Send a Tin to the Front, because
Chocoloids take the place of natural
laxatives (vegetables, etc.).

Price 2 6 per Box of 60
Tablets. Sample Box 1/3.
containing 24 Tablets. From
all Chemists or post free from

THE CHOCOLOID CO., Dept. M, Stirchley Laboratories, Birmingham.

AWFUL DANGER OF RUPTURE

Do Not Neglect that Swelling

FREE OFFER TO EVERY SUFFERER

Few people realise the awful danger of Rupture until too late. To begin with, the swelling may be only the size of a hazel nut, and because it is small they think it doesn't matter.

But if neglected that small swelling will grow larger and larger until it affects your whole life, destroys your health, and perhaps brings Death in its train in a sudden and ghastly form.

Do not neglect that swelling if you value your life and health. And do not think to cure it by wearing a vice-like truss, which will probably make the Rupture worse, for there is no need for you to do either. To-day you are offered Treatment and advice which will instantly relieve your trouble and bring about a speedy and permanent cure.

Mr. D. M. Cooper, the well-known Manufacturer of Surgical Appliances, has invented a marvellous Appliance which, by means of a scientific compressed-air pad, closes the ruptured parts, keeps the Rupture in place, and brings about instant relief and eventually a lasting cure.

Sent on Approval

Mr. Cooper says:—I will send to any address, in plain sealed wrapper, on approval, so that the sufferer can examine the Appliance for himself or herself before deciding to purchase it:

1. The special "Mecca" Appliance for the Relief and Cure of Rupture—the Appliance which, owing to the marvellous benefit secured by those who use it, is rapidly superseding the old-fashioned costly and useless truss.

2. Full and complete instructions, which will show you how to strengthen the weakened muscular parts and enable the Appliance to bring about rapid relief and a natural and permanent immunity from any recurrence of the disorder.

The wonderful "Mecca" Rupture-Lock will be sent to you on approval. Examine it for yourself, and you will find it immeasurably superior to the old-fashioned truss, and likely to prove of the greatest relief and benefit to you. Moreover, the cost is only a few shillings, and easily within reach of all. If you are a sufferer, do not lose a moment. Write to-day (a post card will do) to Mr. D. M. Cooper (Dept. 108), 124 Holborn, London, E.C.1 (next door to Gamage's).

Mr. Cooper can be seen personally every day (except Saturday) between the hours of 11 and 1 and from 2 to 4.

(D. M. Cooper, Ltd.)



Mr. D. M. COOPER.

Bottled up Energy

—an apt description of a flask of Bitro-phosphate tablets, because these tablets literally create new energy.

Just as an exhausted electric battery can be recharged, so can energy and vitality be restored to weak and exhausted nerve cells by the aid of this truly wonderful

BITRO-PHOSPHATE

(Regd.)

Concentrated Food for the Brain and Nerves

Take one tablet during or immediately after every meal, and carefully note the result. Very soon your appetite will improve, your eyes will grow brighter, and your cheeks glow with health. You will sleep better and wake up bright and refreshed. Your brain will act quickly and clearly, nerves will cease troubling you, and a decided gain in mental and physical strength will be apparent.

Proof is furnished by a letter received recently from Mr. P. G. Newman, Quay, Poole, who writes:—"My nerves were in a terrible state and I was daily wasting away when I first tried Bitro-phosphate. But this remedy has proved wonderfully effective and to-day I am a new man."

Nothing but good can possibly follow the use of Bitro-phosphate tablets. They contain no harmful, habit-forming drugs and may be safely taken by men and women of all ages.

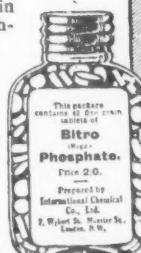
Invaluable for the Weak and Run-down.

Bitro-Phosphate Tablets

Can now be obtained in handy pocket flasks of high-class chemists and stores everywhere.

Price 2/6 per flask, containing sufficient tablets for two weeks' treatment, or sent post free on receipt of price by sole manufacturers:—

International Chemical Co., Ltd.
7, Wybert St., MUNSTER Square,
London, N.W.



Bitro-Phosphate

THE NON-STRUML RESTORATIVE OF NERVOUS FORCE & ENERGY

Drink Delicious

MAZAWATTEE

TEA

SOLD BY ALL GROCERS

Riley's Remarkable Free Trial Offer When the Boys Come Home—Be Ready.

A Splendid Billiard Table in your home for a small first payment NOW

When Riley's decided to make this extraordinary Trial Offer they knew they ran no risk; for no one ever does send a Riley Billiard Table back—so greatly does it add pleasure to boresome winter evenings, so full is it of an unlimited power of profitably occupying the young folks' minds—and so excellently made to yield all the delights (even to an expert) of the full-sized Billiard Table. If you send a P.O. to-night for 10s, you get carriage paid (no charge for pack) to your door, within a few days, the wonder of Riley Miniature Table specified below, and if (after 7 Days Trial) you are not satisfied, pack it up, advise Riley's, and they will have it removed.

Anyone may learn the real live game of Billiards, no time on a Riley Billiard Table; less time in putting one in our home; watch it fills in the hours from till mid-night with an excitement at every moment, and interest to keep everyone enthralled, from ten-year-old Tommy to Grandfather.

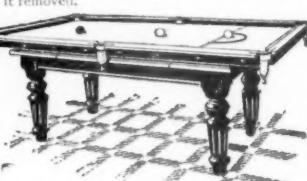
**10/- DOWN brings to your home RILEY'S
"HOME" BILLIARD TABLE.**

10s. down—and then, whilst you have the table, you pay the balance in 14 consecutive monthly payments of 10s. Cash Price 26 16s.—a delightful convenient size to fit over an ordinary table, and to fit an ordinary-sized room. Measures 6 ft. 4 in. by 3 ft. 4 in.



Cs. This shows the Riley "Combine" Table and the easy method of changing.

E. J. RILEY, Ltd., Brandon Works, Accrington. 147 Aldersgate Street, E.C.



This is the Riley Miniature Billiard Table, shown resting on Dining Table.

In addition to the Miniature Billiard Tables, Riley's have another style, which may be paid for by equal monthly instalments over a period of 13 or 15 months—

RILEY'S "COMBINE" BILLIARD AND DINING TABLE

—really a magnificent piece of furniture, which may be converted into a large-size Billiard Table by a very simple automatic raising and lowering action. Cash price from £13 10s.

FREE on receipt of post card, full detailed Catalogue of Billiard and Dining Tables, and small or tailored Tables and Sundries. Every Table is as perfect as modern science and high class workmanship can make it.

London Showrooms: 147 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

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should be in every household. The simplest and most effectual remedy ever discovered for Colds, Nasal Catarrh, Hay Fever, Asthma, Bronchitis, and Influenza. Cures the Worst Cold in a Few Hours. **1 1/2** or by post **1 6** from all Chemists, or J. M. MANNERMAN, Chemist, Edinburgh.

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OF ALL CHEMISTS.

THE QUEEN'S HOSPITAL FOR CHILDREN
Late "North Eastern" Hospital
HACKNEY ROAD, BETHNAL GREEN, E.
President: The Earl of Shaftesbury.
136 Beds always full, 33,000 Out-Patients annually.
87,000 Attendances. £12,000 a year expenditure.
Assured Income under £1,000. No funds in hand.
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Inquiry System in force for prevention of abuse.
PLEASE HELP
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"ANZORA" is the *only* Non-Greasy Preparation that will effectually "Master the Hair," keeping it smart all day.

Anzora Cream and Anzora Violets are sold by all Chemists, Hotel Livery, and Military Canteens in 1.6 and 2.6 (double quantity) bottles.

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HAIR CREAM

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Used in Royal Households:

**JOHN BOND'S
"CRYSTAL PALACE"
MARKING INK**

For use with or without heating (whatever kind is preferred). Permanently protects linen because it won't wash off.

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INGRAM'S
"Agrippa"
PATENT TEAT
British Made.

HYGIENIC—STERILIZABLE.

BAND TEAT & VALVE

The "Agrippa" Patent Teat is the only Perfect Teat extant. Fits any boat-shaped Feeding Bottle. Cannot slip off. Black or Transparent Rubber. Teats 3d. Valve 3d.

Sold at all Highclass Chemists.

J. C. INGRAM & SON, LTD., HACKNEY WICK, LONDON, E.9.

HOW ELECTRICITY RESTORES LOST NERVE FORCE

FREE BOOK THAT YOU ARE INVITED TO
WRITE FOR TO-DAY.

Nerve weakness is the most common form of illness to-day. The war-strain has exacted a heavy toll in thousands of British homes far removed from the trenches.

What is the result? Thousands are flying to transient and artificial drug treatment in the vain hope of finding new nerve health. The result is tragic. Everywhere you find men and women who are victims of most painful and distressing nervous disorders.

Now all sufferers from nervous disorders can obtain quite free a most valuable and helpful book, in which the only true and successful methods of overcoming these conditions are fully described. This book has been especially written to show just WHY electricity is the One Force that can pour into an enfeebled body the natural Electricity or Nerves Force of which it has become bereft.

DRUGS ARE ONLY SPURS FOR A FLAGGING BODY.

You cannot be healthy and enjoy life if your nerves are out of order. Do not, on any account, seek relief in stimulants or narcotics, which simply paralyse and stupefy the natural cry of the nerves for nourishment and vital power. THERE IS NO DRUG OR CHEMICAL THAT CAN ADD EVEN A FRACTION OF AN OUNCE TO A STAGGED AND ENFEEBLED NERVOUS SYSTEM. All such are merely whips and spurs for a tired and flagging body.

Has weakness and debility robbed you of the healthy, happy enjoyment of life? Do you suffer from any form of nervous derangement, or from Rheumatism, Lumbago, Sciatica, etc.? If so, you should write for a FREE COPY of this most interesting book. It costs you nothing, and it shows you how to recover lost nerve tone, health, happiness, and bodily vigour.

CLERGYMAN'S STRIKING TESTIMONY.

The Rev. A. D. Cope, of Southampton, a gentleman of over eighty years, found in this wonderful Electrological Treatment a final and permanent cure. In a letter he says:—

"I not only received great benefit myself from the use of your appliances, but have seen wonderful results in the cases of others to whom I have recommended or given them. One gentleman, aged seventy, who was doubled up with Sciatica, in six weeks was upright and alert as ever, and a lady, a clergyman's widow, was quickly cured of the same complaint, and eagerly sent the appliance to a friend, who also had similar benefits."

If you are a sufferer from :

Neurasthenia

Constipation

(Nervous) Dyspepsia

Insomnia

Kidney Troubles

N-uralgia

Rheumatism

Circulatory Disorders

you are invited to write for a Free 64-page book, which describes the simplicity of the Electrological Treatment which cures naturally, inexpensively, and in the privacy of your own home.

ENQUIRY COUPON

By posting this Free Form to-day you will receive the "Guide to Health and Strength." You are under no obligation in applying for this book and particulars of the Pulvermacher appliances.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

POST TO The Superintendent, Pulvermacher Electrological Institute, Ltd. (17 Vulcan House), 58 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.



**Scientific Aid
in the
Prevention
of
DISEASE.**

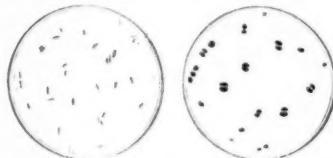
Bacteriologists have been wonderfully successful in late years in discovering and isolating for observation purposes the various micro-organisms which are responsible for disease.

And they recommend that when danger threatens in cold and wet weather, or whenever the vitality is lowered, ill effects from germ attacks may be prevented by the subject's taking

**EVANS'
Pastilles**

**the effective precautionary measure
against the Microbes of Influenza,
Catarrh, Pneumonia, Diphtheria, etc.**

The unique antiseptic qualities possessed by Evans' Pastilles strengthen the vocal cords, allay irritation, and loosen any mucous secretions which may be present.



These illustrations are from actual micro-photographs of the *Bacillus Influenzae* and *Micrococcus Catarrhalis*—taken at our Kuncion Bacteriological Laboratories. Evans' Pastilles will overcome these microbes.

**TRENCH
ODOURS**

Evans' Pastilles are splendid for preventing the unpleasant effects which result from trench odours, and they are invaluable for service conditions. Send a tin to the Front.

WARNING : See the raised bar on each Pastille. None are genuine without this mark.

Obtainable from all Chemists and Stores, or Post Free from the Makers.

**1/3 Per
Tin**



**Evans Sons Lescher & Webb, Ltd.,
56 Hanover Street, Liverpool.**

W. J.

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The Colour of your Blouse

Fashions come and fashions go, but the blouse remains the chief standby of the busy woman of moderate means. After all, there are few things more attractive than a fresh, dainty blouse. It makes quite a shabby skirt look passable, and wonderfully lightens up the dark, useful costumes which form the most necessary part of the equipment of the modern woman. White is always attractive—if it suits; but unfortunately it is not really becoming to everyone, and a soft tint of cream is usually much more satisfactory.

It is so easily obtained, too—just a squeeze of the Dolly Cream stick in the washing water and your blouse takes on a most becoming tint of pale ivory. Or if you prefer it darker yet, it is easily possible to obtain any shade from the lightest cream to deep copper—and all for 1d.

Try it on your curtains, too; you will be delighted with the result.



DOLLY CREAM

For Curtains and other Things

is sold by Chemists, Grocers, and Stores everywhere. Write for free Booklet "Making the best of the Curtains."

W. EDGE & SONS, Ltd., Bolton

Also at Lombard Buildings, Lombard St., Toronto, and 15 Valentine Street, New Bedford, Mass., U.S.A.

**Don't
pay
more
than** 1d.

CHARITABLE APPEALS.

LONDON CITY MISSION.

"The Hearthstone is the Keystone of the Commonwealth."

THE Committee earnestly appeal for increased funds to meet the urgent and growing demands of the work, both in the homes of the people and amongst Sailors and Soldiers, Munitioners, and Wounded Heroes in and around the capital.

Over one million domiciliary visits were paid by the Society's missionaries during last year, including 150,000 to the Sick and Dying.

The fellowship of Christian friends is also invited in providing the aged and suffering poor with temporal comforts during the Winter Season.

Contributions (crossed "Barclays Bank") should be made payable to the London City Mission, and sent to the Secretaries, Mission House, 3 Bridewell Place, London, E.C. 4.

Chairman and Treasurer: F. A. BEVAN, Esq., D.L. Secretaries: Revs. T. S. HUTCHINSON, M.A., and MARTIN ANSTEY, B.D., M.A.

320 MISSIONARIES EMPLOYED.

The Editor of "The Quiver" will receive and acknowledge any Donations or Subscriptions for the under-mentioned Charities that are forwarded to him, addressed La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C. 4.

THE Colonial & Continental Church Society

Patron: H. M. THE KING.

Have you any conception what life in LILLE is like at the present time?

Famine stalks abroad, the German oppression is terrible, the roar of the guns is unceasing. Yet amongst the suffering remnant of the British inhabitants—women and old men—the Society's Chaplain remains to comfort them and cheer them.

This is one example of the work of the Society. It has Chaplains for our own countrymen in Brussels, in Lille, in Holland, and all along the Western Front. In all our Colonies it has clergy ministering to newly settled, scattered, or poor communities. It deserves well of all British Christians.

It is very badly off for Funds. Please help this deserving cause.

Secretary: The Rev. J. D. MULLINS, 9 Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, E.C. 4.

PLEASE SEND A CONTRIBUTION to the CHURCH ARMY WAR FUND

FOR THE SUPPORT AND EXTENSION OF

HUNDREDS OF RECREATION HUTS, TENTS AND CENTRES

for our gallant men at home and every theatre of war, including

ABOUT 200 UNDER SHELL-FIRE ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

An INDISPENSABLE BOON, both to the wounded and the whole.

MANY MORE ARE URGENTLY NEEDED.

Huts cost £500; Tents £300, fully equipped; £50 pays for small Chapel at one of the Huts.

Cheques, crossed "Barclay's, a/c Church Army," payable to Prebendary Carlile, D.D., Hon. Chief Secretary Headquarters, Bryanton Street, Marble Arch, London, W.1.

NOSTROLINE
TRADE MARK REG.

BORN OF COMMON SENSE!

"NOSTROLINE" was born of common sense. It is the offspring of wisdom. It is a SPECIFIC—a special article made for a special purpose, applied in a special way to a special spot.

It is a common-sense remedy for CATARRH, HEAD COLD and INFLUENZA, which lie in the head—not in the stomach. Therefore "NOSTROLINE" is applied to the head through the nostrils (sniffed up), and it passes into all the air passages of the nasal and vocal organs, where it at once kills the very germs of the disease and soothes and cures their ill effects. It is the thing for CATARRH, or, as our soldier boys would say, it is some cure, which means it is "all right." Get a 1/3 tube to-day, and use it freely both for prevention and cure. Perfectly harmless. Even for tiny children it is A1.

If cannot obtain, send P.O. or Stamps (15) to Q358, HAROLD E. MATTHEWS & CO., CHEMISTS, CLIFTON, BRISTOL.

SHORTHAND IN 24 HOURS

First Lesson Free.

You can completely acquire the theory of Dutton's Shorthand in 24 hours. This modern, simple high-speed system consists of 29 characters and six abbreviating rules only.

In the recent shorthand contest for novices, cheques for £25 were paid by *The Daily News* to two lady students who passed a test of 100 words a minute after only eight weeks' study of an hour or two daily.

Dutton's Shorthand is now accepted in all Government Offices, and there are many vacancies waiting to be filled at good salaries. 250 Women Clerks are wanted weekly for service in France.

A First Free Lesson, a comparison of the Dutton with the Pitman, Sloan-Duployan and Gregg systems, particulars of the Day and Evening Classes at the new London Branch, 92 and 93 Great Russell St., W.C.1 (4 doors west of the British Museum), and of the unique *postal* course of tuition, will be forwarded to every reader sending stamp to Dutton's Business College, Desk 42, Skegness.

PEACH'S CURTAINS

1918 New Catalogue contains exclusive features in Curtains and Curtain Materials at Makers' Prices, the complete *Curtain Guide*. Also *Imperial Hem* and *New Adaptable Curtains*. Peach's read, Biplex, Casement Curtains, *Notes*, *Muslins*, *Linens*, etc. Write to-day.

S. PEACH & SONS, 120 THE LOOMS, NOTTINGHAM

MOUTH PARASITES & DISEASE.

At a Lecture at Oxford on this important subject, Dr. Pixell Goodrich (D.Sc., London) remarked that: "People very much neglect the *mouth wash*, many using instead either a powder or paste which is required only for *polishing the teeth*." Dr. Goodrich advocated Thymol as being the best solution for a mouth wash.

"SoToL" ANTISEPTIC MOUTH & THROAT BATHS

fulfil every condition required by the Highest Authorities. Thymol being a feature of the Sotol formula. Chemists and Stores sell 40 Sotol Effervescent Tablets for 1/-, 100 for 2/-. If suggested, firmly reject all substitutes, as in these circumstances direct supply can be obtained post free from the **WESTERN DENTAL MFG. CO., Ltd.**, 74 Wigmore Street, London, W.1. Testing Samples 2d. stamps. Note: Sotol is All-British.



OLD age and a nervous temperament favour sleeplessness. Before retiring take a cup of the 'Allenburys' DIET. This complete and easily digested food soothes the nerves, promotes calm sleep and ensures digestive rest. Largely used by the Medical Profession.

Promotes Sleep.

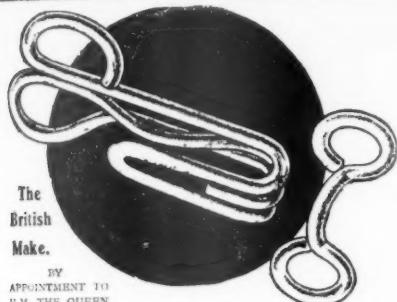
"I have used the 'Allenburys' DIET at night on going to bed with considerable benefit. I find it sustaining and comforting and sleep much better after taking it." (SIGNED), M.D.

AIDS DIGESTION. INDUCES SLEEP.

Allenburys' The DIET For Adults

No Cooking or Cow's Milk required. Made with boiling water only.

In Tins at 2/- and 4/- each of Chemists.
Allen & Hanburys Ltd., London, E.C.



The
British
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BY
APPOINTMENT TO
H.M. THE QUEEN

Newey's Hooks and Loops embody every essential of a perfect fastener. Easy to sew on. Easy to do up and cannot become accidentally unfastened.

NEWHEY'S HOOKS & LOOPS

NEWHEY BROS., LTD.,
Bearley Street, Birmingham.



THE FAMOUS FABRIC for
elegant and serviceable
home-sewn SLUMBER
SUITS.

LAWRIE & SMITH'S REAL SCOTCH WINCEY

Its lasting softness, unsinkability and long-wearing qualities are the surest key to night-time comfort and economy. For Ladies' Slumber Suits, Night Dresses, Children's and Men's Pyjamas, Lawrie and Smith's Real Scotch Wincey is ideally suited, and any of the garments mentioned can be easily and speedily made with the aid of our free patterns.

Price from 1/- per yard.
SCOTCH MADE ZEPHYRS.

Gingham and Printed Voiles.
Made of the World's Finest Cotton by deft hand-woven Scotch weavers, there is nothing more dainty yet enduring, more becoming yet inexpensive, for Spring and Summer Dresses and Blouses. A post card will bring you a full range of the newest designs and colours in printed and plain effects.

SCOTCH TWEEDS AND
TARTANS.—Ladies have also the choice of an extensive range of Tweeds and Tartans in real Scotch colourings and most up-to-date designs. Patterns and prices on application.

LAWRIE & SMITH (Dept. F),
Real Scotch Wincey House, Ayr, Scotland. (P)

Fenton Ware

DAINTY CROCKERY

Direct from the Potteries.

A Bargain. Dinner & Tea Service, 32/6

We are making 20,000 of this entirely new shape and design in the **FAMOUS SWANSEA BLUE**. Send 32/6. We will send you a copy of our special offer, if you do not quite satisfied return same, when your money will be instantly returned. It is only the great quantity that we intend to sell makes it possible to sell at this low price. **Sound delivery guaranteed.** We can send you **2500 pieces** in **5** days. **Postage paid.** **THE "FLORENCE" SERVICES** are as follows:

32/6 the Lot, Packed Free, 32/6.
6 Dinner Plates. 2 Vegetable Dishes. 2 Cake Plates.
6 Pudding Plates. 2 Covers. 12 Tea Plates.
6 Cheese Plates. 1 Sauce Boat. 1 Slop Basin.
3 Meat Dishes. 12 Tea Cups. 1 Cream Jug.
(3 sizes). 12 Tea Saucers.

32/6 LL. TO MATCH.
Tea Set Finished in Best English Gold.
Fit for any Table.

Teapot to Match. FREE. Matching Supplied.
Goods Shipped to all parts of the World.

THE FENTON POTTERY CO., BARNFIELDS, FENTON, STAFFS.

Church and School
Crockery a Specialty

Art-Pottery Album, 30 Colours
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Breakfast, Chamber Services, etc.
600 Illustrations. Also Glass Suites
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advancing in price. **POST FREE.**
WRITE NOW.



*It drives
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RUB WITH
**SMEDLEY'S
PASTE**
Instant Relief in
RHEUMATISM
LUMBAGO, CHILBLAINS &
SORE THROAT, STIFFNESS
Try it-of all chemists
1/3 & 3/- a jar.
or from
**HIRST, BROOKE
& HIRST LTD.
LEEDS.**

HOPE

How it came to a Sufferer from Epilepsy.

I HAD shut the door against hope. There was apparently no room for it in my life. For epilepsy had me firmly, and as it seemed, hopelessly in its grip. My people were all orthodox—men of the family are themselves well-known doctors, keen on upholding the dignity of the profession.

Yet it was, after all, a doctor who opened the door of hope to me by giving me Gilbert Dale's wonderful little book, "Epilepsy: its Causes, Symptoms and Treatment." He bade me read it carefully and profit by it if I could, and if I dared.

One doesn't suffer as I suffered and then be cured as I have been cured without wanting to let others know about it.

Epileptic sufferers can be counted by hundreds of thousands, even in this country, and I want to tell them about the Dale Treatment. I want to give them just the chance to try it that my doctor friend gave me.

The Dale Treatment applies especially, and almost exclusively, to cases of epilepsy which have been turned down as hopeless by the ordinary medical practitioners.

Mr. Gilbert Dale is no quack. He makes no pretension of having discovered a miraculous cure-all for this, that and the other disease. What he desires is to have the chance of deciding whether or not the case of epilepsy spoken of as incurable by your own doctor is or is not curable from his—Dale's—point of view.

Give him this chance of helping you. He has thousands of grateful patients permanently cured of epilepsy, ready to tell of the wonderful knowledge and skill which are his to command when dealing with this special disease. He uses neither Bromide of Potassium nor any poison in his medicines. Indeed, he does not believe in drugging, and the preliminary part of his treatment is the clearing of the patient's system of the baneful effects of pernicious drugs, swallowed in the vain hope of their giving relief.

A personal interview with Mr. Gilbert Dale can be arranged by writing to his Secretary, 68 Holland Park, London, W.



MR. GILBERT DALE.

Readers are earnestly advised to send for GILBERT DALE'S deeply interesting book, "Epilepsy: Its Causes, Symptoms and Treatment," published at One Shilling net. This Book will be sent post free in return for three penny stamps forwarded to MR. GILBERT DALE (Dept. 1), 68 Holland Park, London, W.

ASTHMA FOR 20 YEARS

Completely cured by Veno's after great suffering.

Mr. Blatchford,
Durham.

Mr. William Blatchford, a miner, who lives at 12 Swinburne Terrace, Dilton, Co. Durham, suffered for 20 years from miners' asthma, but at last he got Veno's Lightning Cough Cure, and now he is completely cured. He says: "I cannot praise Veno's enough for what it has done for me. I could hardly get my breath sometimes, and the trouble was always worse at night. Often I dared not go to bed for fear of suffocating, and even to walk out into the open air used to choke me up. But now I enjoy the best of health, and it is all through Veno's. Nothing but Veno's cured me. I think it has been sent to me as a blessing from Heaven. I have told scores about it, and shall do so as long as I live. Publish this letter, and I hope whoever reads it will take my advice and try Veno's for themselves. It is a wonderful medicine—unequalled."

SIXPENNY BOOK FREE.—Write now for "The Veno Book of Health," containing valuable information which no sufferer should be without. Address—The Veno Drug Co., Ltd., Manchester.

Veno's Lightning Cough Cure is the best remedy for:

COUGHS & COLDS,
BRONCHITIS,
NASAL CATARRH,
LUNG TROUBLES,

11¹/₂d.
a bottle.

ASTHMA,
INFLUENZA,
CHILDREN'S
COUGHS.

Larger Sizes, 1/3 and 3/4. The 3/4 size is the most economical.

Of Chemists and Medicine Vendors in all parts of the world, including leading Chemists in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Africa, and India. Insist on having Veno's, and refuse all Substitutes.

Send this Magazine to
the Troops.

The Editor's Announcement Page

COUPON

MOTTO COMPETITION

Name and {
Rank _____
Address _____

THIS COUPON TO ACCOMPANY ENTRY.

THE SECRET AGENT

By Baroness Orczy

A Special Feature

I HAVE much pleasure in announcing that the opening feature of the March QUIVER will be a fine story by Baroness Orczy, entitled "The Secret Agent."

Baroness Orczy needs no introduction. Everybody has read "The Scarlet Pimpernel," and we recognise it to be one of the finest romances in our literature.

"The Secret Agent" is a story of the Napoleonic era, and is one of the best short stories which this wonderful writer has produced.

"Old Fires that Smoulder"

Readers were delighted with the story "Peaceful was the Night,"

with which the Christmas Number opened. I am pleased to state that the Long Complete Story for March is by the same author—Grace Margaret Gallaher—and is entitled "Old Fires that Smoulder." This is a thoroughly good story that will be appreciated by all my readers.

"The People without a Country."

Another feature will be an article dealing with the question of the return of the Jews to Palestine, and will be illustrated by some remarkable photographs.

The Editor

[For Contents of this Number see over.]

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Issued Monthly. Subscription Price, post free, 2s. per annum.

WHEN you want durable LONGCLOTHS,
NAINSOOKS, fine MADAPOLAMS,
the very best FLANNELETTES, SHEETINGS,
made-up PILLOW CASES and SHEETS,

Ask for and get "**HORROCKSES.**"

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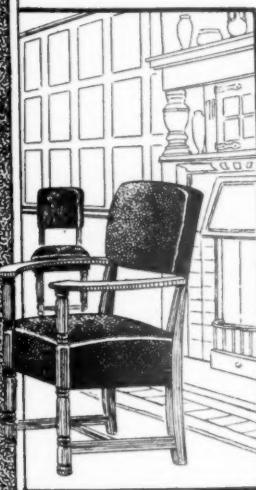
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The Way They Have

by

"BARTIMEUS"

*(Author of "A Tall Ship," "Naval
Occasions," etc.)*

THE coastguard watched the birds intently. The dark speck that broke the smooth shimmering surface of the sea might have been seaweed or driftwood, but for them. Seaweed interests nobody—not even sea-gulls. On the other hand what interests sea-gulls interests coastguardmen. Acting apparently along this chain of reasoning, the coastguard dug his spade into the earth, and made off down the winding gravel path that led to the beach. Once on the sand he stopped, said something in an undertone, and glanced back at the coastguard station; he had come without his telescope.

For a moment he paused, measuring the distance with his eye. He was a man of leisurely and deliberate habit of mind. It was a question whether he went back for his telescope or walked along the foreshore and decided at close quarters what it was that the tide was shrinking from in the warm morning sunlight.

There wasn't much in it one way or the other, he decided after due reflection, and set out accordingly along the wet sands at the edge of the sea.

He was in no particular hurry. Whatever his vices, curiosity wasn't one of them. But it was his job; and as he walked he eyed the sea distastefully as if it had been

THE coastguard was turning over the earth in one of the tiny cabbage patches that belonged to the row of whitewashed cottages on the flank of the headland. The sun was hot and he paused frequently, straightening up and passing the back of his hand across his forehead. Each time he did this his eyes travelled half-mechanically round the blue curve of the horizon, thence along the foreshore, and so back to the cabbage patch, when he resumed his digging.

It was during one of these pauses that he noticed the gulls, and stood motionless for several seconds, shading his eyes from the sun. The tide had turned and left a few yards of sand below high-water mark wet and gleaming in the October sunlight.

Half a mile away a couple of gulls were circling curiously above something that lay in the shallow water, stranded by the fast-receding tide.

THE QUIVER

responsible for more jobs than he personally had much use for.

One of the sea-gulls soared suddenly and flew swiftly out to sea with quick strong beats of its wings.

The other still hovered, as if questioning the sea with thin querulous cries. The coastguard drew near, and it too fled seaward, abandoning the enigma that lay with the little waves lapping round it in retreat.

The coastguard stopped at the edge of the water and stood with his hands on his hips contemplating the jetsam.

"Another of 'em," he said, and was for wading out there and then, till he remembered his wife and what she said the last time he went in with his boots on.

Accordingly he removed his boots and socks, rolled up his bell-bottomed trousers, and splashed out to where the thing was lying. He turned it over gingerly and he shook his head.

"Dentity disc," he muttered, and pulling out his knife, severed the cord that connected a little metal disc to what lay at his feet.

Then he retraced his steps to where his boots were lying, examining the disc as he walked. Three rows of letters and some figures were stamped on it. With difficulty he deciphered them :

A. E. JONES,

TMR RNRT.

1347

BAP

With more haste than he had hitherto exhibited the coastguard replaced his socks and boots and returned to the coastguard station.

His mate was examining a steam-drifter far out to sea through the big brass-bound high-power telescope. He turned as the new-comer entered. The latter threw the disc down on to the desk and stepped to the telephone. "A. E. Jones," he said; "Trimmer, Royal Naval Reserve, Trawler Section, No. 1347. Religion, Baptist."

The other nodded, and resumed his scrutiny of the distant drifter. "Bin in the water long?" he inquired.

"Weeks," said the other, turning the handle of the telephone bell, "an' weeks." Then he picked up the receiver, and in half

a dozen terse sentences set in motion that part of the vast and complex machinery of the British Admiralty interested in the affairs—even unto death—of R.N.R. (T.) No. 1347.

An hour later an immaculate young gentleman with paper protectors to his cuffs, who occupied a corner of a large dusty room overlooking Whitehall, was running his pen down the pages of a tome resembling in appearance the Doomsday Book. "J," he said. "Um—m—m. Jo—Jones—1347. Next of kin, mother. That's the fellah." Then he wrote something on a piece of paper and handed it to a messenger, glanced at the clock, removed his paper protectors from his cuffs, and went off to his lunch, and the spiritual refreshment of twenty minutes' badinage with a rather coy waitress at a popular café.

His part in the drama was taken a couple of hours later by a Registrar of the Naval Reserve at a grimy Welsh seaport, who was also the Assistant Collector of Customs and a deacon at the local chapel; he, at the bidding of a curt telegram, pumped up the back tyre of his bicycle and rode some three miles along a cobbled thoroughfare, till he came to a row of cottages that stared across an evil-looking canal at mounds of slag. He dismounted at the door of the third house and knocked. An old woman answered the summons, wiping her hands on her apron.

"Mrs. Jones?"

"Aye," said the old woman. "Have they found 'im?"

"They have," said the registrar grimly. "An' buryin' him they are to-morrow."

The old woman sat down in a chair and threw her apron over her head. "Anwl!" she wailed. "Anwl, Anwl! Seven year since I set eyes on 'im, an' then he did hit me a clout an' went foreign—drinkin' he'd been . . . Dhu! Dhu! And me his mother."

The registrar entered the squalid room, drew a chair up beside the old woman, and, sitting down, prepared to enjoy himself.

"The Ard-miralty," he began sonorously, unfolding the telegram and clearing his throat; "the Ard-miralty, look you, gives me authority to pay your fare to the East Coast of England so's you can be present at the funeral, Mrs. Jones." Then, his

THE WAY THEY HAVE

voice rising to the triumphant mournful "*hoent*"* of the Welsh preacher, he added, "Are not two sparrows sold for one farthing—!"

The old woman ceased to rock herself to and fro. Her head emerged from under her apron.

"Maggie Ann!" she cried shrilly.

A slovenly girl, with a sallow face, and masses of untidy hair twisted up in curl papers, crossed the yard at the back, and stood in the doorway.

"Get you out my black dress an' my red flannel petticoat, Maggie Ann."

The registrar eyed the girl sternly. "Have you got a black dress too?" he inquired.

"I have indeed," replied Maggie Ann simply. "In the pawnshop, it is."

The registrar consulted the telegram as if it contained directions as to the method of redeeming articles from pawn.

"I am authorised by the Admiralty to issue two tickets to the next of kin of the deceased." He

cleared his throat and contemplated Maggie Ann. "I am prepared to give you one so's you can go to the funeral too."

"There's my married sister," said Maggie Ann reflectively, "with a black dress as would fit me—"

"Get it you from her," commanded the registrar majestically. "An' be at the station at 4 o'clock. I will find a train for you." His manner suggested that trains were things that took even a man a good deal of finding.

He was as good as his word, however. The two quaint figures clad in rusty black, voluble and breathless with the enormity of this adventure, were bundled into a third-class carriage. The registrar handed the elder woman a sheet of directions, and, being a kindly-hearted man, he pressed five shillings into the palm of Maggie Ann's

black-cotton-gloved hand. Then he spoke magnificently to the guard—as one brass-bound official to another—and with a wide gesture of farewell that was partly a military salute and partly a parochial benediction he turned on his heel.

The train slowly gathered speed, and the two women sat staring out of the window as if they were hypnotised. Then Maggie Ann opened her clenched palm and displayed the two half-crowns which she held together with the tickets.

"Did 'e give 'em to you?"

"Aye," said Maggie Ann.



"His mate was examining a steam-drifter far out to sea."

Drawn by
E. S. Hodgson.

"Well, well! Who'd ha' thought it?" said her mother. "Put 'em somewhere safe, Maggie Ann, for fear of robbers." They had the carriage to themselves, and Maggie Ann obeyed her mother accordingly.

Then whispering together in the vernacular, after the manner of the Welsh, crying a little from time to time to keep one another company, and sustained throughout the long journey by peppermint drops of amazing pungency, they were whirled out of the land of their fathers into the unknown.

Among the passengers who shared their carriage later on was a dignified, elderly lady, with silver-white hair and a face of a singular, though rather sad, sweetness of expression. She was dressed in deep black, and listened intently as the old woman told her story for the benefit of their fellow passengers. She did not smile, as did the others, when Maggie Ann of the reddened

* A sort of sing-song chanting.

THE QUIVER

eyes and nose, with wisps of untidy hair protruding from under her married sister's hat, was bidden to display the tickets in token of an Empire's solicitude for the women of the humblest of her sons.

"You are lucky," she said gently. "You can at least bury your dead. That was denied me. I lost my first-born in that battle too. He was a sailor like your son was."

They reached Paddington as the dusk was falling, and in the vast echoing dimness of the station the immensity of the unknown descended upon the two Welsh women, as they stood bewildered on the platform among the jostling throng of passengers.

"Find a policeman, Maggie Ann," said the elder woman, consulting the sheet of directions given her by the registrar. "An' ask 'im where to find a tidy li'l' public-ouse where we can stop the night."

But before Maggie Ann could invoke the aid of the law in quest of lodgings, the grey-haired lady who had spoken to them in the train again approached the pair.

"My car is waiting," she said. "Will you both come home with me for the night? I have a big house and a very empty one; there is room for you both. Cook will give you breakfast early, and you can start for the East Coast to-morrow morning in good time for the funeral."

"Well, indeed to goodness!" said Mrs. Jones, and suffered herself to be led to a waiting car in which, to the visible astonishment of an elderly chauffeur, she and Maggie Ann were placed. "There's kind you are, Mum."

"Not at all," said the grey-haired lady as the car started. "I have very few servants now, and there are plenty of spare servants' rooms. I am grateful to Providence for bringing us together into the same railway carriage," she continued simply; "I have always travelled third-class since the war started. I—I am so glad to be able to help"—her hands twisted together on her lap with a little nervous, rather pathetic gesture—"another mother."

The visitors supped in a vast spotless servants' hall, where the floor was of polished linoleum in black and white squares, and the electric light shone down on burnished copper pans and scoured wood-work.

Cook, a stout sentimentalist, afterwards

bade the old woman draw a chair to the fire and together they brewed strong tea.

"I've buried two husbands," she said, "but never a bairn have I borne. I don't know but what you're to be envied, Mrs. Jones. Her ladyship, she gave her only son, same's what you did, and her heart is broken. But she holds her head the prouder. 'There's worse things than dyin' for the right,' she sez." Cook dabbed at her eyes with a huge pocket-handkerchief.

Janet, the trim housemaid, was interested in the Navy for personal reasons in which a good-looking signalman "on Jellicoe's boat" played a considerable part. She it was, early the following morning, who took Maggie Ann in hand. "Did you ever see such hair wasted?" she said, contemplating Maggie Ann's honey-coloured tangled thatch.

"Even if you are going to your brother's funeral . . ." and bade her comb it, and dressed it with such cunning that the pale slatternly girl stood silent, staring before the mirror. The generous enthusiasm of the woman who is fond of her sex seized Janet. "Here," she said. "Put this blouse on; it's one her ladyship gave me. I don't want it. And see if these boots will fit you. . . . Oh! what stockings—wait a minute." Drawers were rummaged, bits of lace and crape unearthed, the married sister's hat was pounced upon and underwent a swift metamorphosis in Janet's nimble fingers. "There!" she said at length. "Why, I believe you're pretty!" Maggie Ann turned from the glass with her hazel eyes aglow, and a faint colour creeping towards the cheek bones set wide apart in her pale face.

II

TOWARDS dawn a British destroyer limped into the little harbour embraced by one flank of the headland where the coastguard station stood.

One of the blades of the destroyer's propeller was missing, and the "A" bracket, designed to support the shaft, threatened to decline any further responsibility in the matter.

The destroyer had sighted an enemy submarine on the surface at close quarters during the night. The submarine had dived with commendable promptitude, but not quite fast enough to avoid the nimbly manœuvred destroyer, who grated over

THE WAY THEY HAVE

her outer skin at thirty knots. The conning-tower of the submarine, which bumped along the length of the destroyer's side, was responsible for the disinclination of the "A" bracket for anything but a merely passive attitude towards the damaged propeller.

The impact, however, accelerated the submersion of the submarine considerably, and the destroyer made for the nearest harbour with leaking stern-glands, and a ship's company uplifted beyond mere jubilation.

The commanding officer went ashore to telegraph his report of the incident while the chief engine-room artificer and the blacksmith put their heads together over the fractured "A" bracket.

Ashore, the Lieutenant-Commander en-

countered the chief officer of the coast guard.

"Seein' as 'ow you're in the harbour, sir," said the chief officer, "mebbe you'd like to land a party for the funeral this afternoon."

His tone was that of a man organising an entertainment under difficulties. "This 'ere's a dull 'ole, an' a bit of a show would liven 'em up like."

The Lieutenant, standing on the steps of the telegraph office, looked up the sleepy street.

"Whose funeral?" he inquired.

"Party o' the name o' Jones," replied the C.O. in tones of melancholy enjoyment, "Trimmer, Royal Naval Reserve, washed ashore near the coastguard station. Mother attendin' funeral at 2 p.m. If you was to



"The Lieutenant-Commander arrived on deck and interrupted the oration"—p. 295.

Drawn by
E. S. Hudgson



"Maggie Ann stood at the little gate and gazed after them with swimming eyes."

Drawn
by
E. S. Hodgson.

land a firin' party, an' a bugler, an' mebbe half a dozen mourners, sir, we could 'co the thing in style."

The Lieutenant mused in silence for a while. The "A" bracket would take till five o'clock, and the funeral was at 2 p.m. "I can't guarantee the mourners," he said, "but you can have the firing party and the bugler. And if any of the men wish to attend as mourners, I'll give them leave."

"Thank you, sir," said the chief officer. "The boy scouts from 'ere is turning out, and the firemen from Nordbury, an' the lifeboat's crew. They was all for 'avin' a collection afterwards in aid of the institotion. But I sez to them——"

The Lieutenant-Commander had sighted a pink parasol, shading a white muslin dress above neat ankles, that emerged from a shop farther down the street. If he walked quickly enough he ought to be able to get a glimpse of the face hidden by the parasol by the time he reached the pier where his

gig was waiting. Two years of war in a destroyer quickens masculine interest in such problems. He descended the steps hurriedly. "That'll be all right," he said. "The party'll be at the landing-place at one-thirty," and hastened down the street in the wake of the pink parasol.

Twenty minutes later he was climbing on board his destroyer.

"Mr. Foulkes," he said to the gunner. "I want you to take a firing party of eight men and a bugler, to attend the funeral of an R.N.R. trimmer who's being buried ashore this afternoon at 2 p.m. Better run them through the manual before they land. And if any of the port watch want to attend as mourners, they can have leave. Some of the stokers may like to go."

The torpedo coxswain who had overheard the conversation went forward to herald the tidings along the mess deck. "Fancy!" said a bearded seaman ecstatically, when he heard the intelligence, "first we sinks a perishin' submarine, an' then strike me giddy if the bloke don't lush us up to a funeral ashore! I reckon that's actin' proper 'andsome."

At 1 p.m. the funeral party fell in on the upper deck; the brown-gaitered firing party, with rifles and bandoliers, and an attendant bugler, were given final injunctions by the gunner.

"Don't forget now, when we arrives at the mortuary, dead-ouse or what-not, the firing party will rest on their arms reversed,

THE WAY THEY HAVE

the muzzle of the rifle placed on the toe of the right boot, 'ands resting on the butt, chins sunk upon the breast, at the same time assumin' an aspec' mournful an' subdued."

The Lieutenant-Commander arrived on deck and interrupted the oration.

"What's that brigade fallen in forward there, Mr. Foulkes?" he inquired. "We aren't giving general leave."

"Them's the mourners, sir," said the gunner, sternly surveying the crape-swathed ranks, who, after the fashion of sailors when about to go ashore, were preening themselves and squaring off each other's blue-jean collars.

"Mourners, 'shun!"

The mourners sprang to attention and gazed solemnly into vacancy.

"How many of the port watch are landing, in the name of mercy?" asked the commanding officer.

"The 'ole lot, sir," said the gunner, "bein' wishful to pay respec' to the dead."



The third volley rang out across the quiet churchyard that was the last resting-place of R.N.R. (T.) 1347.

The bolts of the rifles rattled and snapped as the firing party unloaded; the last empty cartridge case fell to the ground with a little tinkling sound, and the drummer raised his bugle to send the thin sweet notes of "The Last Post" out into the stillness of the afternoon, speeding the fighting soul upon its final journey.

The triumphant, heart-breaking "Ave Atque Vale" died away on its last unfinished note, and there was a moment's utter silence. A hoarse word of command, followed by the grounding of rifle-butts, succeeded the stillness, and the firing party swung off down the hill with the air of men who had handled a dramatic situation without discredit.

The mourners, at the invitation of the chief officer of the coastguard—who held that a thing worth doing at all was worth doing properly—repaired to the coastguard station to partake of a cup of tea.

Here as many as could crowd into the

little house were introduced, in a congenial atmosphere of tears, hot tea and peppermint, to the mother and sister of R.N.R. (T.) 1347.

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Jones in a gratified aside to Maggie Ann, "to think Albert Edward had so many friends! There's fine young fellows too."

The mourners, not one of whom had ever set eyes on Albert Edward in their lives, acted to this cue with the inevitable instinct of the sailor for the rôle required of him.

When, reluctantly, they departed, shepherded back to the boat by the torpedo coxswain, Maggie Ann stood at the little gate leading to the cabbage patch, and gazed after them with swimming eyes.

"There's kind they are," she murmured, "grand, strong men an' all . . ." and thrust a crumpled twist of paper one had given her, bearing his name and address, into the bosom of her dress.

A week later the commanding officer of the destroyer, in the exercise of his duties as censor of the ship's company's letters, came across the following epistle :

"DEAR MISS JONES,—Hoping this finds you as it leaves me in the pink, thank God. I take up my pen to write you these few lines dear Miss Jones, it gives me much pleasure to write to you as promised after your brother's funeral which I hope you will find time to write me a few lines as I am a very lonely sailor. Being an norfun and no incumbrances whatsoever dear Miss Jones I now draw to a close with best respects and please write soon.

"from your sincrre friend,

"JOE WALSH, able seaman.

"P.S.—I enclose postle order for £1 so plese dont be offended, excuse me, hoping you will buy some little present for your self."

The Lieutenant-Commander restored the document to its envelope. "Thank God I was taught young to accept responsibility," he said, and a little smile crinkled the corners of his eyes. He picked up the censor stamp and pressed it fervently on the envelope.



FOR WOUNDED SOLDIERS

A New and Interesting Competition : £10 for the Best Motto designed by a Wounded Man

By THE EDITOR

AS announced in previous issues, I have opened a Competition for Wounded Soldiers. I am offering a First Prize of £10, a Second Prize of £5, and some compensation prizes, for the best Mottoes worked by wounded or invalided soldiers and sailors.

The closing date is April 6th, and I am very anxious that, during this coming month, the Competition may be brought to the notice of men with time on their hands, and the facility for working out a pretty design. My readers are in touch with wounded men all over the country. May I ask as many as can to point out this Competition to men likely to be interested?

To the Wounded Men

It is amazing what men can do when they try. I have seen some of the most perfect examples of fancy work lately; not, as might be expected, carried out by women with long years of training, but worked by wounded soldiers, who, before the war, scarcely knew what fancy work meant.

Maybe you have artistic talent which you have not previously developed. Perhaps you have already done some painting, drawing, or designing. At any rate, there is no harm in trying. Choose a Motto that has been helpful to you—the sort of Motto that you would like to see on the walls when you wake up in the morning. Then choose your material—determine whether you will draw or paint it on card, or cut it on wood, work it on linen or some piece of silk you can lay your hands on. Ingenuity will count as well as skill.

The First and Second Prizes will become the property of the Editor, but any other entry will be returned to the sender if a stamped, addressed wrapper is enclosed. Otherwise the Mottoes will be sent to whatever hospitals and institu-

tions the Editor believes will make best use of them.

Remember to fill up and enclose the coupon given in the advertisement section of this issue.

Mottoes to Cheer

The Competition is for Mottoes of a character suitable for hanging up in a hospital or institution for the wounded. The choosing of the Motto is left to the competitor, and he has the widest latitude in the choice of his material and method of execution. Of course, beauty of design and execution will be a main factor in deciding the Competition; but the adjudicators will also bear in mind the suitability and cheering character of the Motto itself.

It will be seen that there is ample room for variety, ingenuity, and artistic effect. Any material may be used, providing the total cost does not exceed two shillings.

The Rules

The Rules are as follow :

1. The Competition is only open to Wounded or Invalided Soldiers and Sailors.
2. The Motto may be upon any material—paper, board, linen, canvas, etc.—and drawn, painted, or worked by any process—water-colour or oils, cotton or silk, or any other method. But the cost of the materials used must in no case exceed Two Shillings, and the finished article must not be more than 3 ft. in its longest dimension.
3. Each Motto must be accompanied by the Special Coupon (which appears in the advertisement section of this issue), with the name, address, and rank of the competitor.
4. The entries must be addressed to the Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.4, marked "Competition," and sent carriage paid. They must be received by the Editor not later than April 6th, 1918.
5. The decision of the Editor is final.



The COUNTRY COTTAGE by Harold Begbie

Concluding Article in the Series "No Place Like Home"

"THE more one thinks of it, the more unreasonable does it seem."

"And what is that, pray?" demanded the lady, for we had been talking of nothing at all.

My thoughts, you see, had become so strong that they forced themselves into sudden utterance, leaving the context in the silence of my mind. How on earth was the lady to know what had engaged my meditations?

To preserve a reputation for sanity I repeated my observation with an initial word for emphasis: "Yes, the more one thinks of it, the more unreasonable does it seem."

"You are possibly inveighing against the short skirt?" said the lady.

What the Men will not do

I rose slowly from my chair, and pacing the room with the gravity of a philosopher, I spoke as follows: "It is unreasonable to suppose that men who have tasted the wine of war will go tamely back to the lemonade of clericalism. That is to say, we must not expect the clerk to go back to his stool and the shopman to return to his counter. These young men will not lay down the bomb and the bayonet to take up

the office ruler or the yard measure; they will not divest themselves of trench-stained khaki to don the black tails of civic servitude. On the contrary, they will——"

"Emigrate," said the lady.

"True," said I; "but whither?" she inquired. "A colony by any name will——"

"My dear lady," I cut in, "we cannot afford to lose the cream of our manhood. We must endeavour to find room for them here. In a word, we must colonise our own rose-garden of England."

"And how will you do that?"

Thus began the ruminations which are responsible for the following remarks. I present them to the reader with an expression of hope that he will take them up where I leave them, and, by his passion for propaganda and with his well-known powers of organisation, fashion them into practical shape. For myself, confiding to the reader the business of finding the means of income, I am content to find the returned soldier a cottage in the country.

What the Cottage must be

This cottage must be as different from the poor cabins in which our peasants have hitherto been housed as the Ritz Hotel is

different from a village ale-house. It must have all the allurements of beauty and all the conveniences of invention. Our purpose must be to attract intelligent people to the country, and, mark you, to those almost unhandselled parts of the country which are far from stations and towns. We must abandon the bad notion of our fathers that any kind of dwelling is good enough for a countryman. We must bestir ourselves with the high ambition of creating a new order of yeomen.

If only we could get Sir Horace Plunkett to forsake Ireland and take charge of our poor ramshackle empire of English shires!

I have seen good, sound, new cottages in Ireland, surrounded by an acre of ground, which can be rented for a shilling a week. Smaller cottages, with a little less territory, can be had for sixpence a week. England lags behind the far-advancing stride of Erin.

The Most Attractive Dwelling in the World

Now, the cottage I have in my mind for England and her returned soldiers is of a rather better kind than the cottage of the



One of the pictures
of country life.

Irish peasant. I conceive of it as the most attractive dwelling in the world. If necessary, I would keep going the present war taxation for a week or a fortnight after peace is declared in order to provide the money for these Arcadian allurements. For, you see, I am not thinking of housing peasants, who would be intoxicated by a single water-tap within doors, but of attracting to the country a hundred thousand intelligent young men who have been born, bred, and almost destroyed in our suburbs, where you can have a bath without fear and trembling, and where the question of

sanitation is as little trouble to consciousness as the metabolism of the stomach.

Ladies and gentlemen, science has made all these things possible for the country, and for the person of small means. What *raison d'être* has the Government and the State except to spread through the whole community those great blessings of science and invention which enable the soul of man to live freely and luxuriously, without the labour of the beast and the disgust of the savage?

The Question of Sanitation

Let us take the question of sanitation. I live in a village, and a village in which my neighbours have to attend to their drains. But for me, I am as completely unaware of my drains as a gentleman in St. James's Street or a costermonger in Golden Lane. They do not exist for me. They entail no labour. They call for no expense. There they are, just as they are in London or Leeds, and far better than they are in Petrograd. There is scarcely a provincial city in France so well drained as my cottage on a Sussex hill.

I have installed, and for a few pounds, what is known as the Beattie system. Mr. William Beattie discovered that in many old cesspits throughout Herefordshire the trunk of an apple-tree had been dropped years ago, and that in almost every case where this had been done the water, instead of being cloudy, was as clear as spring-water. He is a wise, observant, and reflecting man of science. His researches brought him to an old book written by a French priest in which that goodly man counselled his flock to place the trunk of a tree in their pits, so that they might avoid evil smells and save themselves the constant labour of emptying. Reflection and research led him to a great discovery. A certain bacillus which breeds freely in these pits *when it is provided with a breeding-ground* is a destroyer of the pits' contents. Patient labour led him to the invention of an infallible breeding-ground for this bacillus. With this contrivance placed in the pit, the top sealed down, and an underground overflow provided, you are as free from all drain bothers as any dweller in a city.

The Question of Water

Then there is the question of water. In every corner of England where men are

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likely to live, water can be found. To get it up to a storage tank in the roof needs but a little oil-engine. And this same little engine will make you enough electricity to light your rooms if not to cook your dinner.

"What a bother!" you exclaim. "Fancy having to run a complicated engine to get light and water, when here in London we merely turn a tap on or pull down a switch!"

My dear sir, my equally dear madam, will you be so good as to tell me what you do with the time saved by these contrivances? On your honour, now, is there not half an hour at least in every day of your life when you are bored, when you wish that someone would call, when you feel that existence is insufferably dull?

The Delights of the Oil-Engine

This little labour with the oil-engine is one of the delights of our country life. I can assure you that if your family includes a crop-haired boy of fourteen, he will give you no peace till you let him run the engine. 'Tis as easy a thing as delightful a waste of time. When you have turned on the oil and given the wheel a helping push, all you have to do is to look on; you may quite safely go away and dig potatoes, or nail up a creeper, or feed the chickens, or tether the goats, or pick the apples: but if you are a boy of fourteen you will take a piece of cotton-waste in your hand, stand first on one leg and then on the other, and gaze with an almost overwhelming vacuity at the little engine. It's so jolly to watch it at work.

With this same little engine, if you do not object to a rather screaming noise, you may drive a circular saw, and so cut up all your wood for the winter fires. I have just amused myself by cutting up in two hours enough wood to last my cottage for a couple of months.

All these labours, let me impress upon you, are our intelligent pleasures. We are never bored. There is so much to do that we are always happy. Certain labours we should hate to do, but these jolly things with engines are a part of our pastoral contentment. They give us appetite and assure the slumber of peace.

The Hot-Water Supply

I come now to the question of the hot-water supply.

Unless you are a millionaire and a duffer

you will never tie your bath-water to your kitchen fire. The idea is as monstrous an incongruity as ever got into the head of a stupid builder. Indeed, it is no more necessary for you to burn a shillingsworth of coal from one year's end to the other than it is for you to have cold water in your hot pipes at five o'clock in the morning.

In building your cottage insist upon an independent supply of hot water. A little brick annexe is sufficient room to install a



*The very heart and centre
of a happy servantless life*

coke-stove and a boiler. Fed first thing in the morning and last thing in the evening, this little stove will slumber peacefully all day and give you boiling water at any and every hour of the night or day.

Moreover, and this I must insist upon, you will connect the boiler with every bedroom in your cottage, supplying a basin fixed to the wall, and taps, and a waste-pipe. Here we touch the very heart and centre of a happy servantless life in the country.

Abolishing the Hardest Job

We will suppose that our ex-clerk-soldier is married, or gets married directly peace is declared. His home in the country will depend almost entirely for its happiness on the temper of his wife. She will sigh for the fleshpots of Turnham Green or the *far niente* of Tooting if she has to work like a horse. To make her happy it is necessary that the domestic arrangements should be

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as simple as science can make them. Now the hardest job of home life is carrying cans of water upstairs; and the unpleasantest, carrying slop-pails downstairs. With fixed basins, and water laid on, both of these things become anachronisms. There's nothing left to do upstairs but make the beds, dust the furniture, and sweep the floor. As for this last, with a small vacuum cleaner worked by your electric battery you can get the rooms clean and fresh in a few minutes—baby running behind the cleaner and shouting with joy at its fine buzzing music. Water laid on in the bedrooms is a *sine qua non* of domestic happiness.

There remains the kitchen. I am certain that all the necessary cooking for a small family sworn to the sweet simplicities of Arcadian life can be done on an oil-stove. With an oil-stove, a Welbank boilerette, and a hay-box under the kitchen table, you can cook everything humanity needs for sustenance, and cook it to perfection. Madam's complexion is preserved by this method, and her temper is less sorely put to the test on a day of summer heat.

How about an Income?

Now, I have said that I leave it to the reader to provide an income for the returning soldier. I was aware in saying this of a very marked and disturbing sense of cowardice. If I build a cottage in the country I ought at least to indicate how the soldier may get his living so far from the centres of employment. Dare I say that it is easy to earn bread and butter in the country? Can I confidently protest that any man who chooses to live in the country can support himself by country toils?

I must be careful.

I think it is quite possible for a man with a small pension to increase that increment very pleasantly in almost any English county. I will go so far as to say that a man who loves the country and who possesses sufficient capital to take a holding of fifteen or twenty acres could live simply and contentedly by his labours. Disappointment awaits only the lazy and the ambitious. He who hopes to make a fortune must stick to the noisome town. He who is afraid of hard work must cling hold of the soiled skirts of industrialism.

I am dead against poultry farms. But if you get yourself a copy of Mr. Alfred Gib-

son's "My Poultry Day by Day," and set yourself no higher ambition than to provide yourself all the year round with plenty of eggs and plenty of chickens, you may keep fowls with a certainty of profit. Mr. Gibson's book is the most valuable work in this field yet published. I have distrusted hitherto every writer on the subject of poultry farming. I have found out I know not how many of them as dunces or rogues. But Mr. Gibson's book is the affectionate treatise of a master. He knows what a hen can be persuaded to do. The psychology of the fowl has been his life's study. He is as loving as Fabre in his observations, and as careful as Darwin in his statements. You can build upon him. You can hatch under his wisdom.

As for a cow, no one who is without a long experience of her habits should dream of attempting to domesticate this tuberculous animal. Goats are another matter. I recommend two goats. They live on next to nothing; they give the most excellent milk; and they are such intelligent and humorous creatures that looking after them is one of the amusements of country life.

Keep a Pig

Of course you will keep a pig, if only for the sake of learning contentment from those deep grunts of peace which make a music of her slumbers on a hot summer afternoon. One or two pigs will always pay for their keep, if that keep is not prodigal.

But for income I recommend your attention to the glass-house, the garden, and the orchard. Here, with hard work, you may grow what the city needs and will always pay for, if not very lavishly. It is possible to make a diminutive income out of parsley.

There are other sources of income. In every village there is a lack of comfortable lodgings, and a lack of carriers. A man of a cheerful and willing nature, who keeps a horse and trap, or a small motor-car, can always pick up half-crowns by driving his neighbours to and fro, or can earn sixpences by taking parcels to the station and fetching goods from the market town. And as for lodgings, I am persuaded that a delightful man and wife, inhabiting the cottage I have described, would never have their spare rooms vacant.

I hear you beginning to mutter.

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What! is my husband to fetch and carry? What! am I to hang my domestic happiness to the bell of a lodger?

My dear madam, if you are not persuaded in your soul that all labour is good, and all service can be made ennobling, for heaven's sake stay and suffocate in your suburb. The life I am suggesting is the new life of comradeship and brotherhood which I faithfully believe will be born of the war. I think I hear above the thudding of the great guns the death-rattle of snobbery. I am sure our men will return from France with new conceptions of the social order. Brotherhood has become tremendously real among officers and men in the trenches. I hope and pray that all our foolish little notions concerning the place of labour in the social organism will perish for evermore. We must get it into our vulgar heads that Work is the great duty of all men and all women, and that the greatest of crimes is that of the parasite.

An After-War Dream

And here in conclusion is my dream: I dream that the war will give to English society a mighty impulse towards the sanities of a communal existence, so that instead of a cottage here and a cottage there, each independent of the other, and each making its own light and power, we may have little communities of cottagers throughout the length and breadth of the land. There should be one engine-house making light and power for the community, one coke-stove heating all the rooms and corridors, one water supply, and if possible

one central dining-room for the meals of the community. And from this to co-operation in the fields outside it is but a step. Then, indeed, will it pay a monetary reward to dig and plough our good English soil, to sow and plant our lovely fields, and to keep poultry and pigs in our yards. Brotherhood is the master-word of reconstruction, and the secret of success is co-operation.

Make a Start

If a few families now living in the suburbs, and longing for a country existence, will make a start in this direction, if they will but set about the establishment of a rural community on good, sound, practical lines, they may live in history as the Pilgrim Fathers of the New England here at home.

I believe that a first step in this direction is to get rid of servants, to bring science to the aid of domestic life, and to make a bonfire of all our tawdry old snobberies. As soon as this is done the value of co-operation will be seen, and out of co-operation comes brotherhood, which is the kingdom of heaven here upon earth.

What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world . . .?

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Bring to the country a pure and simple heart, a good resolute will, and a soul that seeks its highest satisfaction in the realms of spirit, and the country will give you food, sleep, health, and a joy almost as deep as the peace that passes understanding.



AWAKENED

THEY have awakened, all the quiet dead,
They have awakened from these dreams
of ours,
They walk in quiet vales by babbling streams
Lovely with daisies and all humble flowers.
The light that shines upon our grassy hills,
The shadows where our trees caress the ground
Are fair, but not so fair as where they walk
Who seem so still beneath the daisied mound.

Thin as the mists of morning are the veils
That hide them from our earth-held eyes so
blind,
Why do we grieve and hurt them by our grief,
When most we would not be to them unkind?

They have awakened, as a child awakes
On summer mornings in its little bed,
To find the fears of night all melted in
Blue morning, every haunting terror fled.

R. B. INCE.

THE BATTLE OF WILSON'S



BARN

BY PETER CLARK
MACFARLANE

A Story of America's Man-Power—
and Woman-Power, too

YOUNG Rupert Townsend came back from Plattsburg, medium tall as he had gone away, but straightened by the dignity of the crossed rifles upon his collar, which proclaimed him a second lieutenant of infantry. It was a few months after America's entry into the war, and he had been one of the first to volunteer. Holding himself stiffly, after the tradition of homecoming martial souls, Rupert walked up the single street of Postlethwaite Hills. By his side paraded Emily Botsford, whose charms from youth had thrilled his heart. Now, after three months in a barren desert of khaki and masculinity, Emily was an oasis of white, luscious, feminine daintiness that almost threw the lieutenant out of stride as he marched beside her.

From time to time Emily smiled knowingly. Rupert, in all the glory of his first command, which even now awaited him some two score of miles away beyond a second range of hills, had not been permitted to suspect that Emily was a commander also. He had never heard of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps of Postlethwaite Hills. But while Emily thought of her secret, Rupert, self-conscious

male, tried to think of the impression he must make upon her. He wanted to see a grave, awed look in her eyes, and he hadn't seen it yet, although they had walked clear through the village from the railroad station almost to Mrs. O'Ryan's.

Mrs. O'Ryan's was the last outpost of trade in Postlethwaite Hills. The porch was dotted with little tables just large enough to hold teacups or ice-cream dishes. At this moment it was occupied exclusively by two young men, Husk Patterson and Ethan Owen. It was understood that Ethan had brains. Most of the larks, plots, and devilries that broke loose among the idle sons of the too-well-to-do who infested Postlethwaite Hills could be traced to the fomenting dome of Ethan.

"He sees us!" whispered Husk, over his ice cream.

"Too proud to look!" sneered Ethan.

"We ought to put some kind of crimp in his wings before he gets away from here," decided Ethan.

"He's got two days' leave," contributed Husk to a possible plan, while still regarding darkly the advancing lieutenant and the maiden. "His regiment's in Sunnyvale. He has to be with it at eight o'clock Thursday morning."

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"How do you do?"

A clear, cool voice had called to the partakers of Mrs. O'Ryan's refreshment from across the way. Two straw hats were dipped in unison, while the mumbling bass of Husk and the crisp tenor of Ethan spoke as one :

"Evenin', Miss Emily."

"Hallo, fellows!" Lieutenant Townsend exclaimed in the tones of casual discovery.

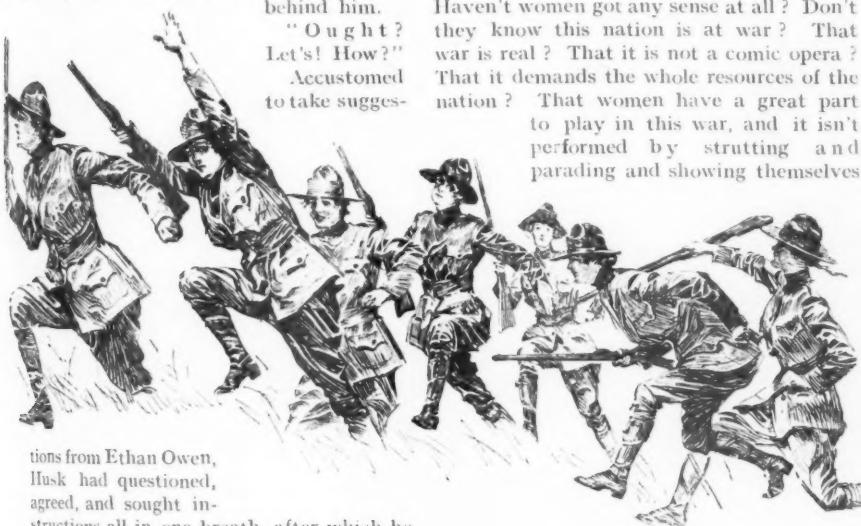
"Ought to take a fall out of 'im," insisted Ethan, when the agony of recognition was behind him.

"Ought?
Let's! How?"

Accustomed to take sugges-

was related to him in two ways. One way was as his sister ; the other was as a fellow soldier, which necessarily brought out the story of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps of Postlethwaite Hills. Lieutenant Townsend's brow darkened, and his eyes, which were black, though not so black as Elizabeth's, were fixed on the child with a fine reproof in them.

"Ridiculous! Absurd! Nonsensical!" A pink flush appeared under the Plattsburg bronze. "The very idea that—Haven't women got any sense at all? Don't they know this nation is at war? That war is real? That it is not a comic opera? That it demands the whole resources of the nation? That women have a great part to play in this war, and it isn't performed by strutting and parading and showing themselves



tions from Ethan Owen, Husk had questioned, agreed, and sought instructions all in one breath, after which he hitched his chair closer and bent his ear lower.

All unaware of these dark designs, Lieutenant Rupert walked on, with radiant joy by his side, down the main thoroughfare of Postlethwaite Hills. Eventually he and Emily arrived at the wide gravelled path leading upward to the Botsford home, and Rupert took his leave ; not, however, before he had arranged to return as soon as decently possible after dinner, with the intention of telling Emily something very particular, and getting it over. Emily, too, had reserved something for the night session. This was her delicious military secret, the fact that she was a commander also, and of higher rank than he.

Rupert's father and mother welcomed him proudly, and his sister Elizabeth was so elated that, forgetting a vow of secrecy to Emily, she had to tell Rupert that she

off in khaki with wooden guns? Silly ninnies!"

Elizabeth was overwhelmed and speechless ; and the family, after having aided and abetted the Young Women's Home Defence Corps in many ways, now traitorously allowed its young man to go on unchecked in his wholesale condemnation.

"I suppose," his mother conceded, "if I had realised how serious things really are, I shouldn't have let Elizabeth go into it."

"Elizabeth into it? Into the Women's Home Defence Corps?" The girl was not joking then? Rupert looked straight at Betty, and laughed. It was a mean, hateful, contemptuous, brotherly sort of a laugh, perfectly amiable, properly affectionate, and entirely maddening. At that laugh Elizabeth flounced down her napkin

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and flounced herself out of the room. Lieutenant Townsend did not know that she also flounced out of the house, over the stile, and into the home of the Botsfords for report to and counsel with the commander-in-chief of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps.

After supper Lieutenant Rupert's father and mother, not having seen their son for three months, claimed some of his time. At last, however, he said :

"Mother, I'd like to run over and see Emily for a minute."

"For an hour, you mean," laughed his father.

"Why, yes, of course you do, Rupert," agreed his mother tactfully and quickly ; "run right along."

Run was almost the word. Rupert vaulted the low stone wall instead of detouring to the stile. In a nook on the veranda of the Botsford house a girl drooped in a swinging chair. Rupert recognised both the droop and the girl and, reproaching himself for tardiness, had visions of a sudden departure of that listlessness of pose, but he was disappointed. There was a hurt look, too, in the brown eyes, together with a puffiness beneath them as of recent tears.

"You've spoiled everything!" Emily pouted, giving a petulant and inhospitable push to the swing which set it swaying just when Rupert would have dropped into the opposite corner.

"Why, Emily!" reproached the dismayed lieutenant innocently. "What on earth! I? How have I spoiled everything, or anything even? I don't understand."

"I am captain of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps," explained Emily, and marked her Rupert narrowly.

Lieutenant Townsend nearly dropped, but rallied quickly. He might hold derogatory opinions of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps, but he could hold none such of its captain.

"As my superior in rank, I salute you," he smiled ; but Emily's face was unresponsive, her eye unlighted still.

"Betty told me everything," she specified more fully.

Betty! Aha! Now the whole thing dawned on Rupert. "Good gracious! But, my dear, I didn't know—"

"That makes it all the more convincing," replied Emily. "I know exactly what you think about it now."

"But—but—the very idea! Don't you see how it was, dear? It all seemed so absurd to me, so silly! Such a waste of—of energy!" Thus floundered the lieutenant into hotter water.

"Waste of energy!" Emily was indignant to the point of fresh tears. "And to think that it was visions of you off there at Plattsburg that made it seem grand for us to work hard, too, in the same way. That's where I got this tan, and the girls' hands are stiff and hard from digging trenches and filling sandbags."

There was some conversation that night in the secluded nook on Botsford's north piazza, but all efforts of the lieutenant to organise his position failed. Thereafter it wasn't such a sleepless night he put in, nor such a cheerful breakfast to which he sat down next morning. For an hour after the meal he moped by himself, and then Elizabeth came in, breathless, all smiles and forgiveness.

"Oh, Rupert," she whispered excitedly, "Emily wants you to come over this morning."

Now Rupert should have remembered to beware of just this smile and tone of Betty's, but he did not, though his dignity must be preserved.

"Pretty busy this morning, Sis," he mumbled.

"Of course you are," agreed Elizabeth diplomatically, "but I thought you could find time to slip over about half-past ten. She's awfully busy, too, getting ready for the Country Club drill to-night, but she wants you to wait for her at Romeo's Bench."

"I suppose I can find time to drop over," counselled the lieutenant.

With such dignity as became a lieutenant, Rupert walked past the Botsford house with beating heart. Then he made his way over gravelled walks lined with flowers to Romeo's Bench. The bench proper consisted of a rustic seat, honeysuckle screened from the insert of lawn in front, while the vine grown wall so close behind kept the spot in perpetual shadow.

By Rupert's watch the hour was 10.28, and he sat down patiently to bide a busy woman's time. Happy musings were inter-

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rupted, however, in a very few minutes, by a sound like a shouted command, echoed from far down beyond the orchard where the Botsford meadow joined the Mendenhall meadow. Presently the command was repeated. Rupert stood up and peered out across that square insert of lawn, and down to a stretch of flower-specked grass from which direction came this voice giving indistinguishable military commands.

While the lieutenant stared and wondered, a line of khaki figures sprang into view moving in squad column right up the gentle slope down which he was looking, marching with that rhythmic, unified sway which is begotten only of much practice. Their slightness as compared to the figures Rupert had been accustomed of late to observe, as well as the jaunty youthfulness of their stride, stamped them as cadets of some sort. And yet there was something peculiar about them. They didn't just carry themselves like boys either. Girls! By Jove, they were girls! Their campaign hats were tipped to the left by bulging masses of high-coiled hair. It was the only unsoldierly thing about them, but how they marched! What grace!

His practised eye ran them over: sixteen privates, a colour bearer, a drummer, a bugler, two sergeants and two lieutenants, slightly top-heavy as to officers, while drums, they should know, have fallen into disuse except in bands—but there they were, passing under the trees and coming right out on the lawn.

"Halt!"

And there they stood, a line of girls, armed with wooden guns, but with high spirit in their faces and soldierliness in their bearing. Lieutenant Townsend could hardly repress his admiration. That first lieutenant, who was he? By George, it wasn't a he at all. It was Grace Royce, whose rich contralto, he had heard, always cast her for the male parts in the plays at Wellesley. No wonder! She barked out orders like a regular army drill sergeant.

And somebody was coming down the walk now from the Botsfords' back veranda—also a figure in khaki. Why, it was Emily! How little she was! How different a girl looks when you see her for the first time in—in a captain's uniform. How erect, how trim she was! And how dazzlingly pretty! How positively bewitch-

ing! But there was some mistake. Emily was not expecting him. She was dressed to receive not him but her command, which had just marched across from Mendenhall Meadows.

First-Lieutenant Grace Royce saluted:

"Sir, the company is present or accounted for."

Emily clicked heels, saluted and accepted her command, standing before them, slenderest, sweetest, most soldierly, Rupert declared, of them all. What a prim little chin! How firm the set of her lips, and how commander-like the sweep of her brown eye as it scanned the ranks, and what a thrill was in her voice!

"P'sent—h-ahms! Shoulder—h-ahms! . . . Squads right about! March!"

Lieutenant Townsend stood twenty feet from the lawn, screened by leaves, and saw the whole drill with wonder, amazement, and delight thrilling him to the toes. They went through the manual of arms. They went through complicated parade ground manœuvres. Then they moved out into the orchard and began extended order movements. They had firing practice, with their wooden guns—by volleys, at will and clip-fire, standing, kneeling, and prone. They had bayonet drill without bayonets—parry and thrust, lunges and cuts, traverses and club-rifle. Last of all, the bugle sounded and they charged an imaginary enemy concealed in the lilac bushes which stood between the lawn and the top of the garden, and when the line went by him with a rush of swift, light feet, clubbing their rifles as they would have mounted the lip of the enemy's trenches, Lieutenant Rupert Townsend got a vivid impression that this might under conceivable circumstances be something more than play. He was glad they didn't charge the honeysuckle.

"Comp'n-e-e-e-e-e halt! Assemble to the right! March! Right dress! . . . Front!"

Faces flushed, breasts heaving, perspiration dripping and locks of hair creeping down over ears or eyes, but with line precise and figures erect and strong, the girls stood before Rupert once more, so near that he could have touched the nearest of them with a good long fishing-rod. Again Lieutenant Townsend admired, and again 90 per cent. of his admiration was bestowed

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upon the captain, with the brown coils bulging under her campaign hat while her critical eye surveyed the line.

"Good work, girls!" she said. And for a moment the captain's white teeth showed in a fetching smile.

This was the moment when explosive giggles broke out from the top of the stone wall one foot over the lieutenant's head. The captain slanted a reconnoitring eye in the direction of the sound; Rupert also turned and caught the outlined figures of several small boys crouching amid the thicket of vines above and to the rear of his head. Captain Botsford issued a hasty order.

Immediately two girls left the ranks, seized a garden hose, and began with such readiness to douche the top of the wall and the whole surrounding thicket with a shower of water as to suggest that they had in times past resorted to this means of repelling intruders and found it effective. But this time the small pests proved hard to dislodge. They kept dodging up and down over the wall while the girls dragged the nozzle nearer, entirely unconscious that Lieutenant Rupert Townsend, standing under that same wall, was getting the bulk of the shower and had by this time been soaked to the skin.

And then the valiant Vera Bailey, seeking a position from which she could enfilade the top of the wall, rushed in behind the trunk of the chestnut tree and beheld the whites of his eyes at a distance of three yards.

Womanlike, Vera screamed: "Girls! Oh, girls! A spy!" But, soldierlike, she trained her weapon straight.

"Don't! Don't! I protest!" pleaded Lieutenant Townsend, sweeping off his hat with one hand while with the other he sought to ward off the stream of water that was aimed at his open mouth.

With the first spoken word reinforcements appeared in the form of Sergeant Alice Lennon, to whom Lieutenant Townsend had once plighted a boyhood troth and, proving unfaithful, had thereby earned her lifelong enmity. She recognised him as he recognised her.

"What are you doing here, Rupert Townsend, I should like to know? Come out of this!"

Sergeant Alice, decisive and scornful, seized the soaked lieutenant by his dripping

sleeve and dragged him forth to the light of day before the twenty-four pairs of eyes which belonged to the Young Women's Home Defence Corps. If the Y.W.H.D.C. had fled screaming, if it had giggled, if it had broken ranks and rushed round him to upbraid, Lieutenant Townsend's situation would have been easier; but the corps never forgot its military character for one moment. Their discipline was perfect. Every eye was on him. Sternest of all was Captain Emily.

"Put on your hat!" she ordered crisply.

Lieutenant Townsend gropingly put on his hat and stood rooted to the edge of the lawn while rivulets trickled from his heels.

"Advance and explain yourself!"

Lieutenant Townsend would have laughed. That was really the only thing to do under the circumstances, but who could laugh into the eyes of such outraged dignity? Therefore, Rupert did not laugh.

"It was a—mistake," he faltered. "I—I came here expecting to meet someone, and—and your company marched right in and began drilling, and there was no chance to withdraw."

"Likely, isn't it?" sniffed Captain Emily. "In that case you might have gone unobtrusively over the wall, as the boys came."

"But, Captain Botsford"—and Rupert was trying to exhibit some shreds of self-assurance—"I did not wish to go. I was so captivated—"

"That will be all of that! Private Anderson! You will escort the lieutenant to the stile."

Immediately there was the soul-jarring rattle of a snare drum. Private Anderson was Minnie Anderson, of course, and it appeared that Minnie was the little drummer-girl of Postlethwaite Hills, and that he, Lieutenant Rupert Townsend of the —th Regiment, U.S.A., was to be drummed out of the Botsford garden. Nor was the proceeding allowed to lack anything whatever of formality. Minnie drummed her way in impressive and solitary grandeur around three sides of a square to gain a position by the prisoner's left, Sergeant Alice still maintaining her ground upon his right.

"Right face! Forward, march!"

It was Captain Emily commanding, and Lieutenant Rupert was marched across the

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company front. "Left oblique! March!" and he was headed for the stile. With every step he took the water squigged in his shoes and the drum rolled and snorted its exultation in his discomfiture. The face of Lieutenant Townsend as he went was as red as fire, and the face of Captain Emily was as white as paper; but there was one face in the ranks that was red also and the eyes of which were weepy.

"Private Townsend, advance two paces!"

As before, it was the voice of Captain Emily.

Elizabeth Townsend advanced two paces.

"Why are you weeping?"

"I—I did it," choked Private Betty. "I 'planted' him just for a joke, to make him ashamed of the things he had said about us. I—I didn't know it would turn out that way. It's too awful. You were too hard on him. Rupert's a perfect gentleman, you know he is!"

"The dignity of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps must be maintained," declared Captain Emily, never flinching. "Private Townsend, you will go to my room and consider yourself under arrest."

Elizabeth departed, her steps keeping time to her sobs.

"James is coming now to serve the ice cream. Stack—h-ahms! Fall out!"

Emily caught up her sword preparatory to double-quicking toward the house. "Excuse me, girls!" she called over her shoulder. "I'm going to the kid. What a shame to have to treat her that way!"

"Wasn't it awful?" Emily demanded of Elizabeth, when she held her in her arms. "Didn't he just act so manly?"

"How could you?" moaned Elizabeth. "You could see that he had just been

taken unfair advantage of some way or other."

"But don't you see that I had to?" There were tears of anxiety in Emily's eyes as she put the question, and tears of remorse in Elizabeth's as she answered. "Of course, dear. You were perfectly grand."

In the meantime, wrath pulsated in the veins of Lieutenant Rupert, pulsated so hotly that by the time the seclusion of his room was reached the clothing nearest his body was half dry again; but his outer garments remained depressingly damp and shapeless. There was nothing for it but to go to bed while James did his duty by the uniform.



"Sternest of all was Captain Emily.
'Put on your hat!' she ordered."

Drawn by
Orson Lowell.

Everybody who was anybody in Postlethwaite Hills was at the Country Club that night, and all raved over the exhibition drill of the Young Women's Home Defence Corps.

After the drill and the dance everybody went home. —that is, all but some of them,

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Lieutenant Townsend for instance. He kept himself out of sight as much as possible, but viewed the drill. He was as sure as anything that the captain looked for him in the crowd, and that, not finding him, her features shadowed forth her disappointment to his discerning glance. The drill showed, too, how pathetically hard she must have worked through these three months to gain his approval.

The next morning Rupert did not appear for breakfast.

"Up late, no doubt!" laughed Mr. Townsend.

"Still—as this was his last breakfast with us," reproved Mrs. Townsend.

At this juncture James handed her a note which had just been received at the door. She read:

"DEAR MOTHER,—Excuse my French leave; but then, we're going to France. Ha-ha! I was called away last night by an emergency summons. Didn't even have time to gather up my kit; I'll send over for it, and I'll be sure to see you before we leave this part of the country."

"Why! the boy's gone. He didn't sleep here last night even. Why—" A mother's intuition, as of something unexplained, hung like a shadow in the lady's eye and left an unsettled tone in her voice.

II

THAT same afternoon Scout Master Eddie Stout had the local detachment of boy scouts out on field duty and Scout William McCormick got lost.

"Go to the top of the red hill above the creek and take up observation post on the black boulder in the edge of the raspberry thicket. Hold the position until you are relieved."

Those were Willie's orders. But he missed the red hill with a black boulder in the edge of a thicket. He found a red hill that seemed to answer, however, and, taking up observation, he observed a good many things. He observed a large barn that appeared to stand all alone at the end of a lane with meadow lands about it, and no house anywhere in sight. It was a lonesome, interesting-looking place, and it speedily became more interesting when three or four fellows in a motor-car came up the lane, laughing and shouting, drove

over the hill and down to the barn, where they had a chat with two other young fellows who came out as their car stopped.

These young men didn't look like farmers; Willie noticed that. By and by the two boys went back into the barn, and after being gone a while came out again and the whole six of them piled into the motor and drove away, talking and laughing more uproariously than ever. All this excited the curiosity of Willie, especially as he was getting thirsty, and it seemed his relief wasn't coming. Willie consulted his wrist watch: 5:15 p.m.

There must be a well around that barn, and Willie thought he would just slip over and get a drink and get back on post in ten minutes. He scuttled down the line of a stone fence, squeezed through a pair of bars, and stood in the barnyard. At one side of it, as he had guessed, was a well with a rope and bucket showing recent use.

The barn next attracted him. The doors were double and heavy and locked with a brand-new padlock; but by pulling them out at the bottom he had no difficulty in wriggling through, for Willie was not large. Once inside he was blinded by the dark, but soon his eyes accustomed themselves to their surroundings and he made out a row of empty stanchions on one side for cattle and a row of empty stalls upon the other for horses. Under foot was straw, and across this Willie was moving toward the ladder to the left when a sound like a human groan frightened him.

It was a very terrible groan, but Willie was a boy scout and therefore brave. He advanced and peered down into the deep trough of a manger whence this groan had proceeded. Looking closely, Willie saw a man in uniform like himself, tied, hand and foot, with ropes, with a gag in his mouth. At the sight of small Willie's excited face peering over the edge of the manger, the man groaned louder than ever.

"Comrade, I will help you!" Willie announced manfully, and in two shakes was over in the manger, working at the knot that sealed the prisoner's lips—sealed them open, to be exact.

But the knots were stubborn. William wrestled with them desperately. With nothing accomplished yet, he was dismayed to hear the motor coming back.

"I must go, comrade, or they'll catch

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me," he whispered excitedly; "but I'll bring help just the same."

"Mm-m-ump!" said the man in the manger.

William scuttled for the door, but already the car had come to a stop right outside, and the next instant a hand was on the padlock. Willie was trapped. With a hasty look about him he plunged into the nearest shadow. A dive, a squirm, and Scout William McCormick was lying flat on his back with loose straw over him and trying hard not to sneeze, for the straw was very dusty. He had barely smothered the sneeze when the big doors creaked on their hinges and the hilarious voices entered the barn, with footsteps making for the manger.

"Good afternoon, Loot!" . . . "How you makin' it, Rupe?" . . . "The General's compliments, Lieutenant Townsend, and you're breveted captain for gallan'ry in inaction." . . . "Emily sent her love, Rupert dear." . . . "Your mother got the note, and says it's all right, dear boy."

This was just a part of what the six fellows said by way of greeting to the man in the manger, but it was the part which enabled Willie instantly to grasp the situation. The prisoner was Lieutenant Townsend. He was a man of whom Willie had heard, his present and most passionately worshipped sweetheart, Captain Emily Botsford, having sung the lieutenant's praises to his martial ear. Then and there Willie resolved that Lieutenant Townsend should be rescued, though his life were forfeited in the enterprise. And now they had the gag off and he heard the lieutenant's voice.

"How long are you fellows going to keep up this farce?" he was protesting. "A joke's a joke, you know, but I've got to get back to my regiment at eight to-morrow morning."

"Not a chance, Rupe." . . . "Never see your good old regiment again, Rupe." . . . "We're going to hold you for ransom." . . . "Not to-morrow—about three days from now; Sunday, maybe, when your military career's wrecked proper, then we'll lead you in and claim the reward for capture of a deserter."

"Honest, fellows," argued the lieutenant, "I don't mind being hazed a little, taken away from my friends and all that,

but making me report late for duty—that's a serious matter. A fellow can't explain without being a cad, and yet—you see what it does to me?"

"We see what it does to you, all right!" chanted his tormentors. . . .

Hours passed. They played cards, they ate sandwiches, somebody tortured a harmonica, somebody else sang songs.

And in the midst of these things Willie had time to think about himself. The scout detachment would have been in long ago, himself reported missing and parties sent out searching for him. Would they never drowse off and give him a chance to rescue Lieutenant Townsend? At length he heard two men assigned to watch the prisoner for the balance of the night and the others moving round and talking about places to sleep.

"Here's a thick bunch over here," said one of them, and he came and stood with all his weight right on William's hand. William's impulse was to scream and withdraw the hand, for the man seemed as heavy as a rhinoceros; but, like an Indian brave, like the Spartan boy, like a true scout, he bore the pain without even a twitch, for he knew the man was looking right down at that thick bed of straw, perhaps was going to use it for a pillow. And just then something terrible happened.

The man took another step and planted his foot right on William's so very empty stomach. What followed was really unavoidable. Willie choked a cry of surprise and pain dead in his throat, but he couldn't help squirming, and the two ends of him bounced up like steel springs, whereat the man shouted. But at the very same instant the man threw up his hands so wildly that the lantern went out and he stumbled and fell all over the place where William had been, for Scout William was not there any more. In the sudden, fortunate darkness he was scampering for the door. It was closed, though possibly not locked, but, taking no chances, Willie made a dive for the bottom of it to go out as he had entered. In this moment of wriggling under he had an opportunity to listen.

"What is it?" . . . "What's the matter?" . . . "Where did the light go?" . . . "Look out for Rupe!" Everyone was shouting at once in the pitchy blackness.

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"A fox, or, maybe, a dog," explained the man with the lantern. "Did you hear that funny little yelp? I stepped right on him and he bit me on the leg. There he is now, rattling out under the door."

"He'll get hydrophobia in that leg," thought Scout Willie, now out and up and running like a deer.

The moon was high, and the red hill with the bushes on it was at least half as light as day. William ran over the hill and down a valley and up to the top of another before he even stopped for breath. The first thing, of course, was to communicate with the scout master.

This done, on he went to Captain Emily Botsford.

Emily listened with amazement to Willie's story, told to her in private.

"The very idea! Husk Patterson and old Ethan Owen; of course that's who it is, the brutes!"

And then Emily, with indignant heavings of her bosom, became thoughtful. With an arm around Scout Willie, she questioned him still more eagerly, after which she telephoned to the Andersons that she was going to keep Willie with her that night.

Willie was content, as she led him immediately to the pantry, where he assimilated fortifications of the inner boy like a good soldier while Emily went once more to the telephone. He must have lingered longer than he thought over the midnight supper, for when Emily came and took him to her room he was surprised to find Minnie Anderson and Elizabeth Townsend there, each with her uniform on. Minnie was without her drum, but carried a gun instead.

The girls were flushed and nervously wide-awake, but Willie was sleepy. He must sleep. Yet between long, excited telephone conversations Emily kept rousing him to aid her with the drawing of a map upon a huge sheet of paper, beginning with the diagram of the interior of the barn. She wanted next to know about the lane and the way it entered the barnyard, where the doors were and the well, what kind of a fence enclosed the barn, which parts of it were stone and which were wooden, whether the bushes beside the stone wall were thick and prickly or not, these and many other things.

Eventually, however, the questions ceased, and Willie rolled right over on the foot

of the bed and went to sleep. But if he hadn't forgotten to wind his wrist watch he could have proved that it wasn't five minutes till somebody was shaking him and wiping a cold cloth across his face to wake him up and leading him down the stairs. When he came out at the *porte cochère* the night looked funny, misty and grey. The moon was gone.

Right in front of him were two or three motors piled full of soldiers with guns. They were the Young Women's Home Defence Corps about to launch an offensive action, in which he was to participate, for Minnie was putting him in the seat beside Captain Emily Botsford, who was driving the first and biggest of the cars.

The cars swung out into the road and began the move to Wilson's Barn. Willie heard some of the girls calling it that. In a few minutes they were at the lane which turned off over the red hill.

At the top of the rise they halted. Dawn was coming on the hills, but pools of mist and shadow still lay in the hollows. One of those pools swam in the vale beneath them, shrouding the barn.

The captain showed her lieutenants the map again and then divided her command into three parts. Pointing with her sword, she sent Lieutenant Grace Royce with six men—women, one should say, of course, to be anthropologically exact—to the left, and Lieutenant Emma Watkins, with another six, to the right. Each was to double-quick across lots to a position on the flank of the barn and there await, behind wall or fence, a signal from her to close in.

After allowing five minutes for the two detachments to make their detours, Captain Botsford, with the rest of her command, moved on down the hill, soon to be shrouded in a sea of mist so thick the commander could scarcely see the rear of her column from the front.

In the barn Ethan Owen was holding his watch down to the light of the lantern.

"Time to go," he whispered. "We can just about make it."

"Sure you can get him there?" asked Husk, also whispering. "He's been pretty game. I wouldn't want to miss."

"I can make it in two hours. We're allowing three," assured Ethan.

Husk stood up. Ethan went around rousing the sleepers. As he began his task

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a bob-white whistled out in the meadow. Another answered from the thicket on the right.

"The birds are up," commented Ethan. A third quail whistled from the direction of the lane, and the two in thicket and meadow responded cheerily.

Slowly the men aroused, yawned, stretched themselves into wakefulness, and cast eyes at the spot where the prisoner lay.

Will Ince announced his intention of going out to the horse trough for a wash. Alf Ballard and Charlie Cook elected to follow. But the three never reached the horse trough. Gaining the back of the barn, they confronted the misty outline of an advancing squad of soldiers.

"Halt!" said Lieutenant Royce, with that bark of an army drill sergeant in her contralto tones.

The boys were too startled, or it was too early in the morning to be sensible, and perhaps they thought they saw ghosts. Anyway, instead of halting they turned and bolted, not back to the barn where they might be entrapped, but straight across the yard for the stone wall. Just as they would have gained it, however, a part of the wall became alive and charged them. Their impetus was this time too great to stop. Each went down from the impact of a terrible thrust planted somewhere amidships with a vigour and precision that deflated them completely.

"Hands up!" called an exultant soprano, and three flabbergasted young men, struggling for breath, lay flat upon the ground with hands stretched over their heads.

"I'll go out and give the car the double O while the boys are washing up," said Morton, moving toward the door.

He disappeared, but a moment later stood weakly jabbering by the door again.

"Say, Husk," he panted, "there's a line of soldiers out here. They're coming double-quick from the lane."

Also deciding not to be trapped, Morton turned shrewdly from the open door and fled wildly in the direction of the fence beyond the horse trough, but there encountered the advancing line which had turned the first three back. Doubly excited, he was trying a famous football dodge of his, when something like a baseball bat whizzed through the air and smote him in the pit of his stomach. He went down with a grunt.

"Soldiers!—the nut!" sneered Husk, taking his hands off the prisoner's knots and turning toward the door.

"Something scared him, though," suggested Ethan, also at work on a knot.

"Look!" exclaimed Husk, with a ghostly croak, pointing outward.

Through the half-parted doors Ethan caught sight of the advancing main body under Captain Botsford. But Ethan, as has been intimated, was smart.

With an impetuous jerk he pulled the huge barn doors together, and he and Husk threw their shoulders against them; but Captain Botsford's action was prompt and her forces comparatively numerous.

"Girls!" she ordered, forgetting sex-presumptions in military organisation, "smash that door!"

A line of athletic young women, who had been training in the outdoors for three months, sprang at the door like a catapulting phalanx, the butts of their wooden guns thudding first, followed by the impact of their own weight. The venerable doors scarcely hesitated. The rusty hinges parted, and with a creak and a clash the frame of wood went inward and down, flattening the wiry Ethan and the bulky Husk under the weight of those bounding young Amazons.

For a time all that seemed to survive of the couple beneath was two pairs of feet that turned upward at various ungraceful angles from the bottom of the doors.

"Stay where you are, girls!" directed Captain Emily to her heaped-up command.

The girls did not quite obey. They untangled themselves somewhat and struggled into upright positions, but they remained upon the doors, which showed a disposition to heave and groan while the four protruding feet writhed protestingly.

But already Captain Botsford had leaped across the door to a very amazed young lieutenant, very much awry as to his uniform, who, with wonder, humiliation, and delight all pictured on his countenance, was trying to stand erect, although the lashings which bound him to the stanchions made this impossible. It would sound more military to say that Captain Botsford cut the prisoner's bonds with her sword, but she did not. Emily's sword glittered, but it did not cut, and she severed Lieutenant Townsend's bonds with the gardener's shears, which, in

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a spirit of full preparedness, had been brought along for that very purpose.

"Emily!" gasped the lieutenant, wringing her hand, "I am so grateful to you."

"We have only done our duty," said the captain modestly.

At that moment the rest of the corps appeared in front of the opening. There ensued a moment of silence, which was seized upon by Lieutenant Townsend, who had been swiftly collecting himself.

"I wish," he said, clicking and saluting, "I wish, Captain Botsford, to take this occasion to confess an error in judgment and to correct a false impression extracted from some remarks of mine. I wish to say that the Young Women's Home Defence Corps is a most soldierly body, of which the country may well be proud. This morning you have demonstrated in my behalf four great qualities of a soldier—initiative, courage, discipline, and offensive power. I acknowledge my debt to you."

This handsome speech of the lieutenant's was received by Captain Botsford with a smile of joy and a flush of triumph. It sufficiently cleared the mind for her to recognise that both detachments escorted prisoners.

The prisoners not only looked subdued, they looked respectful. As for the barn doors, they lay perfectly still now. All movement, all groanings even, had ceased.

"Get off the doors, girls!" directed Emily sweetly.

Husk was the first of the flattened to regain his feet and his voice.

"I thought somebody backed the car through the door," he explained ruefully, feeling of himself in several places and gazing outward into the thinning mist as if to make sure the car was still there.

Ethan, gloomy and chagrined, nursed a swelling bump upon his forehead the while he turned a reproachful glance on Emily.

"It serves you right," flashed the captain. "We'll teach you to insult the uniform of the United States. What do you mean, trying to ruin the career of a soldier?"

"Aw—we were just spoofin' him a little," apologised Ethan. "We were going to take him back in time; we were getting ready to start when your Janes came along."

"We were, honest!" protested the other five, with various ludicrous degrees of

earnestness depicted on their crestfallen faces.

Captain Emily weighed the probabilities for a moment and then turned doubtfully to the lieutenant.

"That might have been their intention, really," he suggested, quite nobly, all vengefulness having departed with the circumstances of his rescue, which in their nature constituted a satisfaction most delectable. "They were stirring and whispering about something. At any rate, Captain, I think we might give them the benefit of the doubt."

"Very well, we will," decided Captain Emily with clearing brow. "And yet they ought to be punished in some way."

She regarded the culprits darkly again till a bright inspiration came to her.

"You'll be needing volunteers over there at camp, won't you?"

"Of course; none of the companies are full," replied Lieutenant Townsend.

Ethan Owen pricked up his smart ears. "But we're registered and waiting for the draft now," he suggested, with a look of awful apprehension, which was immediately reflected in the faces of the other five.

"Yes, of course, you are," said Emily sweetly; "but it shows a finer spirit for men like you to volunteer. Besides, I think it would be so pleasant for Rupert to have some of his dear friends in his own company, so pleasant for him and so—so salutary for them."

Ethan's mouth was open to frame another protest, but Emily would not hear him.

"There are cars enough, with yours, which I hereby commandeer," she announced decisively. "It's twenty minutes past five now. By half-past seven o'clock Lieutenant Townsend will be in camp, and he will have the credit of bringing with him six volunteers, which, doubtless, will do no harm to his standing. Both the lieutenant and the volunteers will have the honour of being escorted by the Young Women's Home Defence Corps of Postlethwaite Hills."

The volunteers looked at each other unhappily and helplessly. There really was nothing more to be said, except, perhaps, what Scout Willie McCormick expressed when he put himself in evidence for the first time this morning.

"Say!" he inquired of Ethan. "I want to see the place where I bit you."

A GUEST OF THE NATION

The Unique Position of the American Ambassador

By DENIS CRANE

Unlike all other Ambassadors and Envoys at the Court of St. James, the representative of the United States holds an intimate position in our social hierarchy and in popular esteem. He is more a national guest than an official foreign representative.

DINING the other day with a party of friends, all wide-awake people fairly conversant with public affairs, I asked if anyone knew the name of the Japanese Ambassador. Not one could supply the information. The same with respect to the Ambassadors of Italy and Spain. As to Russia, one member of the party thought it was "Count Somebody," and one associated the name of M. Paul Cambon with France. But practically everybody knew that the American Ambassador was Dr. Walter Hines Page.

A Curious Position

The incident illustrates an interesting phase of our international relations as well as a curious trait in our national character. At the Court of St. James there are now only six diplomatic envoys of supreme rank, other countries being represented by envoys or Ministers Plenipotentiary, or by *chargés d'affaires*. These six Ambassadors rank high in society, coming immediately after princes of the blood royal. Yet, with a single exception, their position in London is not a very important one. We do not

take much account of them or of their doings. A few lines in the Court Circular are enough to chronicle the movements of these "foreigners," whose presence at State functions is noticeable chiefly by their diplomatic uniforms.

The One Exception

The exception is the Ambassador of the United States, who holds in our social hierarchy and in popular esteem a position warmly unique. He is welcomed more as a national guest than as the official representative of another Power. All his doings are matter of sympathetic comment in the Press, and, from the beginning of his sojourn with us to its lamented termination, he is run after as patron for all sorts of literary and learned societies, as honoured guest at prize givings and speech days, and as principal actor at stonelayings and unveilings. And whereas the emissaries of other Sovereigns adorn our official ceremonies chiefly by their distinctive attire, the representative of the great

Dr. Walter Hines Page,
the American Ambassador.

Photo: *Sutcliffe*.

American Republic moves quietly—and perhaps all the more conspicuously—among us in plain evening dress.

Ties of Blood and Sentiment

The reason of this popularity is not, of course, far to seek. The ties of blood and sentiment, of social intercourse and common ideals, that bind us to the American people, extend equally to the accredited representative of the American President, and, indeed, in him are concentrated and personified.

To enter the American diplomatic service there are no examinations; once appointed there is no security of tenure; there are no rules of promotion; and there are no pensions. The President himself makes the appointments, choosing almost invariably members of his own political party. When there is a change of President, the whole *corps diplomatique* usually goes out of office.

Thus it has happened that appointments to the London Embassy have been made from outside the diplomatic service rather than from within. Partly owing to the fact that the American diplomatic service is notoriously badly paid, and partly to the social qualities which an appointment to the Court of St. James demands, it has not always been easy to find a man with the necessary qualifications and means willing to undertake the position.

An Expensive Honour

As recently as 1913, or thereabouts, Mr. McCombs declined to be United States Ambassador in France because he could not afford the time or the money; and President Wilson made the refusal an occasion to deplore that his country had to ask such sacrifices of those invited to serve it abroad. Men of outstanding ability, unless they be extraordinarily patriotic, are not likely to abandon fortunes in America to take up, in the heart of the British Empire, under universal observation, a position for which perhaps their past careers have offered little in the way of preparation. Diplomacy is half business and half society. The men who have been appointed have generally succeeded in the first by the exercise of that business ability which is a native characteristic of the American; while as to the second, if they have been too advanced in life readily to conform to some of our con-

ventions, the brilliance of their reputation and their personal charm have redeemed any social defects.

Quite a number of American Ambassadors were already known to us as journalists or men of letters. In fact, the United States Embassy in London has probably higher literary traditions than any other diplomatic mission in the world. This is a sure avenue of approach to the British heart. Our great middle classes adore literary talent, and if not prepared to go so far as the French in condoning the foibles of their idols, at least regard them with indulgence and make allowances in advance.

Famous Literary Ambassadors

The literary reputation of Ambassadors like John Lothrop Motley, whose "History of the Dutch Republic" Froude said would take its place among the finest stories of this or any other country; and George Bancroft, author of the monumental "History of the United States," the first volume of which appeared in 1834 and the last in 1882, has indeed outshone their diplomatic fame. Yet Motley, at any rate, was a man of great personal fascination. Bismarck said of him that he had "uncommonly large and beautiful eyes," while Lady Byron said he was more like her husband than anyone she had ever known.

Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Bret Harte were never Ambassadors in the strict sense. The first-named was secretary of legation only, while Hawthorne and Harte were consuls, the one at Liverpool, the other at Glasgow. But their brilliant works, known throughout the Anglo-Saxon world, swell the literary traditions of America's representatives in Britain. During Irving's term in London he received the Oxford D.C.L. and the medal of the Royal Society.

A Conjunction of Western Stars

Harte was at Glasgow during the same period that James Russell Lowell was at the Embassy in London, 1880-5, and this conjunction of Western stars in the English firmament made a deep mark on the intellectual life of the period. Harte was perhaps the most universally popular writer the States have sent to fill an official post. Only ten years before he came he was Professor of Literature at California

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University. But Lowell—also a professor at Harvard, and later editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and the *North American Review*—by his “Biglow Papers” and “My Study Windows” won a loftier place, both as a humorist and a critic.

John Hay, Ambassador 1897-8, came to us with a reputation earned during five years on the *New York Tribune*, by his faithful service as secretary and friend of Lincoln during the whole of the latter's Presidency, and by his famous “Pike County Ballads,” which have given to literature at least two distinct human types—“Jim Bludso” and “Banty Tim,” the Western steam-boat man and the nigger soldier of the Civil War.

Whitelaw Reid has been described as the Sir William Russell of America, his exploits as a newspaper correspondent in the Civil War placing him, before he was thirty, in the front rank of descriptive writers. Always a bookish man, he showed, in the control of the *New York Tribune*, of which he ultimately became editor and principal proprietor, how great a power journalism may become when inspired by real literary culture. Reid was specially popular in London because his paper was one of the few American journals that championed the British cause in the South African War. Moreover, it has been said that his insistence on the retention of the Philippines did much to embark America on the career of Imperialism that claims so much British sympathy.

A Popular Ambassador

But Reid was popular on personal grounds also. He was a past-master in the art of

pleasing, and delighted in doing people good turns, even though they were unknown and without claim. To this fine quality of agreeableness and the possession of a large stock of good small talk, which made him immensely in request at social functions, he added a courtly and distinguished bearing.

As under the shadow of war international relations are charged with a new sensitiveness,

and as the immediate prelude to a declaration of hostilities is usually the dismissal of the official representative of the country concerned, a word must now be said about the privileges and duties of an Ambassador.

The credentials an Ambassador brings consist in a sealed letter from the Sovereign in person whom he represents, and must be presented in person to the Sovereign to whom he is sent; and they contain a general assurance that the former Sovereign will approve and confirm whatever is done by the Ambassador in his name.



The Ambassador's Official Residence in Grosvenor Square.

Photo: H. M. King.

The Right of Personal Audience

An Ambassador is entitled to certain well-recognised rights and privileges, among which the chief are personal audience of the Sovereign—a privilege which in England is accorded only in the presence of one or more Ministers of the Crown.

An Ambassador's house, moreover, is as sacred as his person, for it is supposed to be part of the territory represented by the flag which he may hoist over it. All the members and servants of the Embassy share the same inviolability, as do also his messengers and mails. They cannot even be arrested and prosecuted without his consent. He is also free of customs duty and pays no taxes or contributions to the public

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revenue, although, curiously enough, he is not exempt from payment of local rates.

His duties are to keep his Sovereign well informed of all that may concern his interests; to protect, and if necessary defend, the persons and interests of his fellow-countrymen abroad; to maintain the most amicable relations with the Sovereign to whom he is sent, and with his Ministers, and to observe towards them the utmost respect, veracity, and goodwill; and to observe a strict neutrality between contending parties in the State and abstain from interference in its internal affairs.

Most Pleasant—and Most Exacting

From what has been said above it will be agreed that, as someone has observed, the position of American Ambassador is "of all diplomatic posts the pleasantest in most ways and the most exacting in some." Happily, it has an unbroken record of success. America has never sent a representative to the Court of St. James whom she was subsequently invited to recall. Even John Adams, who came to George III. as the envoy of an independent Republic, filled his difficult position with such grace that the disgruntled monarch could do no more than show himself ill-pleased to see him.

Yet it is obvious how easily a delicate situation may arise; for, after all, an Ambassador's primary business is not to please the foreign Sovereign to whom his credentials are addressed, or the foreign people among whom he sojourns, but to please his own State Department. It would be easy for an Ambassador, feted and applauded as America's representative invariably is, to forget this. In fact, one such—John Lothrop Motley—did so far overrate the importance of his own individuality and forget his true relation to the State Department at Washington, that Secretary Hamilton Fish felt led to request his resignation. Mr. Bayard, also, on one occasion departed slightly from the strict neutrality incumbent on him, with the result that though he was not subject to discipline, he was in other ways made to feel his fellow-countrymen's displeasure.

But these, it will be remarked, were faults in England's favour and contributed rather to the Ambassador's popularity than otherwise.

One of the embarrassments of the United States Embassy, however, is what Americans themselves frankly term the "stinginess" of Congress towards its diplomatic service. Not only is the official salary of the Ambassador in London so small—\$17,500 and a trifle for office expenses—that in New York it would barely suffice for a polite family of six with any pretensions to culture, but also he has to find his own house and pay his own rent. This means that only wealthy men, or poor hard-working men who have married rich wives, and who are prepared to pay £5,000 a year and upwards out of their own pockets, can afford to accept the position. Until recently the offices of the Embassy were in Victoria Street. They are now in Grosvenor Gardens, while the official residence of Dr. Page is in Grosvenor Square.

Dr. Page

Dr. Page, who came to England in 1913, is worthily upholding the traditions of his office. Tall, and with the student's stoop, he is a noticeable figure in any gathering. Like so many of his predecessors, he has occupied some important editorial chairs, among others those of the *Forum*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the *World's Work*; and his respect for journalism was recently marked by a graceful act that will not be forgotten by Fleet Street men. When, in July last, a Memorial Service was held in St. Bride's Church for London journalists who had fallen in the war, Dr. Page was one of the first to arrive, and occupied a seat by Lord Burnham in the front of the nave.

"In his appointment," wrote an Anglo-American at the time, "President Wilson has endeavoured to resuscitate Ambassadors of the Motley, Lowell, Bigelow class. He has sent Dr. Page to London, Dr. Van Dyke to The Hague, Mr. Nelson Page to Rome, and Mr. Schurman to Athens. And he has offered other Embassies to professors and writers and to men mostly known, not for their possessions but for their intellectual distinction. This is a move in the right direction, and, unless it encourages Congress to persevere in its niggardliness and to refuse to establish permanent Embassies on the ground that almost any habitation will do for professors and such-like, it will prove a very wholesome move."



AN ENGLISH ROSE

by
DAVID LYALL

is Kane, an Irishman with a grievance against the English; the other's name is Steering.

During a temporary absence of Lady Winyard a bomb from an enemy aeroplane falls in a field near the hospital, stunning Cicely and mortally wounding Steering. On his death-bed Steering asks Cicely to marry him. The girl does not love him, and hesitates very much. Finally, however, she accedes to his wishes, and they are married, Steering passing away the following morning.

The incident by no means ends with the death of the "husband." It is revealed that he is Baron Steering, and when his mother, Lady Steering, hears of his death, she at once comes over to France, and insists that her son's "widow" shall accompany her back to Deverills, the family seat.

Lady Steering is accompanied by her daughter Caroline.

SYNOPSIS OF OPENING CHAPTERS

LADY WINYARD goes out to France to run a private hospital for the French Red Cross. She takes her favourite niece—Cicely Marsham—with her as a nurse and general assistant. They meet at the hospital—named *Cœur la Reine*—two fellow-countrymen, who are acting as orderlies. One of them

CHAPTER XII

Cicely Reaches Home

CICELY, lying wide awake in her room on the fourth floor of the Hotel Cambon, fancied she heard the boom of guns at sea.

Usually a sound sleeper, she could not account for the restlessness which possessed her. At *Cœur la Reine*, where she was on her feet through twelve or fourteen hours of duty, her head had scarcely touched the pillow before she was off into the land of dreamless slumber, which prepared her for the arduous labours of a new day. She was not over-tired on this night. The pilgrimage she and Caroline had made in the byways of Boulogne, and on the tram to some of the environs, was mere child's play in comparison with the strenuous work she had put in every day at *Cœur la Reine*.

She sat up in bed at last, and dropping her chin on her pink palms, began to take a fresh view of the situation. To-morrow, all being well, and no fresh obstacles being raised by the Port authorities, she would leave France probably for ever.

Her heart ached intolerably at the thought, with an ache that had something deeper at the source than a sentimental regret at leaving shores she had learned to love. She was cutting the knot once more,

starting out on a new line altogether; and though she had spoken bravely and positively about returning to *Cœur la Reine*, her inner consciousness assured her that it would never happen.

After much talk, and considerable quietly-spoken opposition from Lady Steering, Caroline had received a grudging consent to remain in the war-zone. Every argument she and Cicely could invent and muster had been brought forward, all to be met by Lady Steering's invincible argument: "It may be all you say; I don't deny it. But Caroline's duty is at home. Who will look after the village and do all the things I am not strong enough to do?"

"I'll do them while I'm there," Cicely had said on the spur of the moment, and had been surprised to find that was the argument to clinch the business.

She was clever and candid, and found it difficult to grasp the type of woman represented by Lady Steering—the early-Victorian type, which, while seeming to be humble and unassuming, and, above all, feminine, ruled with a rod of iron. The type lingers here and there still, in the economy of our national life, but it is remote from cities and can only exist in a certain environment.

Caroline, so capable and splendid, was powerless in front of it. Strong as a horse herself, she was helpless before her mother's

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weakness of body and determination of mind. It is not such an unusual combination as might be thought, and it is a well-nigh invincible one. Strong men, ruling in their own domain in the world of men, have had to bow meekly to its absolute decree. With it there is generally a sweetness, an assumption of clinging, womanly ways, an outward deference to masculine superiority which the masculine mind finds it impossible to resist.

When Caroline emerged victorious from the conflict, she wiped her eyes, half laughing and half crying, and followed Cicely to her room.

"Thank you ever so much! I never should have been allowed to stop here but for you, Cicely."

"It's extraordinary," said Cicely, beginning to understand part at least of the conditions under which Caroline had managed to support existence. "Is she always like that? Don't you get doing *anything* you want?"

"Only small things that don't matter; and even then she has her say," said Caroline good-humouredly.

"It is very autocratic. I suppose your brother could not stand it," Cicely observed reflectively.

"There is a different front for men," said Caroline, finding a strange relief in tearing away the veils in which all her life had been wrapped. "There is an outward deference but an inward determination which gets there just the same. People think the women of the past generation had no power! I tell you they had all the power without even fighting for it. And there is no move in the game they couldn't teach the militants of any sex, nationality, or creed. I do believe they could even give points to the Germans!"

Cicely was drawn and interested beyond measure by the passion with which Caroline spoke.

"I had no idea of all this. I've never come up against it. My mother is so different. She tries to manage us all, but it is quite open and guileless. I think it must be preferable. I shouldn't know how to deal with your mother, Caroline. I should feel such an awful brute if I didn't do what she wanted instantly."

Caroline nodded.

"Precisely. It is exactly what one *does* feel. I'm a baby in arms yet, Cicely, and you can imagine what a joy it will be for me to be free even for just two months."

"Two months; but it will be a taste, Caroline; and you'll never go back. Meanwhile, what is to become of *me*? What do you suppose will be the net result of my visit to Deverills, even supposing I can remain there long enough to give you your two months?"

Caroline shook her head.

"I daren't prophesy, but somehow I think you are going to be very good for mother. You see, she likes you, and then you are a personality. Besides, your position gives you certain rights."

At this pronouncement Cicely visibly shrank.

"I don't want to claim any rights. Haven't I been trying to make that clear as noonday to both of you? And surely your mother cannot possibly expect that I am to spend the rest of my life at Deverills, an object of respectful sympathy to the village, etc. It simply can't be done, Caroline."

Caroline laughed with a sort of guileless enjoyment.

"Don't you see, dear, you are an immense comfort to mother, because you are so good to look at, so irreproachable in every way? She is going to have the time of her life, showing you round at Much Havers and receiving the congratulations and the condolences of the whole county!"

"Oh! but, Caroline, I don't want them. And I am capable of behaving badly when I don't like things. I do think that in the circumstances the best thing would be to say as little as possible about the affair. I don't feel, I assure you, as if I had the smallest right to be called Lady Steering even."

"You'll get used to that," said Caroline quietly. "And I hope you will love Deverills. It is a dear old place. What it wants is what it never will have—oceans of money spent upon it. Everything is going to decay, though, mind you, Cicely, there are directions in which money might be saved and even made. Only mother won't listen. Everything goes on in the way it has always gone on, and so poor old Deverills has got left in a backwater. There is nothing really left now excepting the house and the home farm of which I told you before."

Cicely was thinking over these things and many more that Caroline had said during that illuminating conversation, and her brain became very active where Deverills was concerned.

From her immediate future her thoughts flitted once more to the personality of the "Mystery Man" who was exercising, though she had not fully admitted it, such a powerful influence on her outlook. She could picture him in the routine of Red Cross work at *Cœur la Reine*; she saw in imagination his strong, efficient handling of the poor human wreckage brought in by the convoys. She had learned to read the expression of his face and to recognise the strong protest his innermost soul was making against the sacrifice and the appalling waste of war.

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But she could not follow him up the line to the awful trench, the devastating barage, the hand-to-hand conflict with the ruthless foe that had made such an onslaught on the peace and liberty of the world. She rocked herself to and fro in the still grey dawn, hearing in imagination, or in reality, the boom of distant guns, and, somehow, the realism and awfulness of war came home as it had not yet done.

Suddenly she prayed. It came over her with a passionate feeling of helplessness and forlornness that life had suddenly become too awful and poignant a thing for even one human being to handle it alone. She had never lost the habit of prayer, but never had it been a vital necessity until then.

In the grey dawn Cicely prayed for the troubled land she was leaving, that it might soon be freed from the horrors of war, and that its baptism of fire and sword might be compensated by a new and glorious era of prosperity and peace.

At five o'clock next afternoon the boat train, heavily laden, arrived at Charing Cross, and was met by anxious crowds who for several days had suffered the sickness of hope deferred. Cicely had wired from Boulogne to her own people, but was in no way surprised that none of them were on the platform. Three months in France had made her fully acquainted with the vagaries of the postal arrangements in time of war. She had persuaded Lady Steering to accompany her to Streatham to spend the night, suggesting that they could go down to Much Havers more comfortably next day, or even after a few days.

"You see, dear, we can write or wire from London, sure that the message will get through without too much delay. They are not expecting you at Deverills, are they?"

"They can only be expecting me if they got Caroline's wire. She did wire, I suppose?" she added with a sudden air of reproof.

"Why, yes, of course. She sent both mine and yours at the same time. Why should Caroline not wire?"

"I'm sure I don't know. Caroline has failed me in this crisis, Cicely."

"Oh, no! The time had come for Caroline to—do something on her own account," said Cicely, her face flushing a little, for she had very nearly made use of the slang her brothers adorned their conversation with, and explained that it was time Caroline "had a look in." Already she knew that her mother-in-law did not like slang and that most of the attributes of modern life, especially some that the war had brought into prominence, had pained her inexpressibly.

Cicely's joy at the prospect of seeing her own people again was so poignant as to be almost painful. She had had some diffi-

culty in convincing Lady Steering that it was imperative that she should see them without delay and in persuading her to go out to Streatham for a couple of nights. But by dint of quiet insistence she gained her point. She was a very accomplished traveller, especially on Continental routes, and had a way of handling railway officials with the most astonishing results which filled the less experienced with envy.

Before the train drew up she had caught the eye of a sturdy middle-aged porter whom she decided could handle heavy luggage efficiently. She had brought all her own belongings away from *Cœur la Reine*, which was one of the levers she used in persuading Lady Steering to break the journey.

"I can't take all this Red Cross stuff to Deverills—and hadn't I better get some clothes?"

Lady Steering consented on that suggestion, and at the same time felt herself more and more yielding to the spell of the girl's personality which had so quickly made itself felt at *Cœur la Reine*.

"How I should like to go to the City and fetch Daddy!" said Cicely as she stood holding on to Lady Steering's dressing-bag, while the porter retrieved her trunks from the pile on the platform. "But we can't, because our drive will be quite long enough. Thank you, you nice man!" she added to the porter who, in record time, had secured all their belongings. "Now a taxi—a good one—to take us out to Streatham Hill."

A few minutes later they were inside the taxi, and Cicely, a little breathless, handed the man a florin. She had a royal way with tips which she always considered well-spent money.

"Now are you quite comfortable, dear?" she asked Lady Steering. "And not too tired? Did I manage you as well as Caroline?"

"Better, my dear, better. Caroline is helpless in a crowd. Where did you learn it all?"

"Knocking about between Paris and London. I used to do the journey three or four times a year when I was at school at Neuilly. Oh, I wonder what they'll say at home, and whether they will have got my letters! If they haven't, just think of the explanations! It makes one's brain positively reel at the prospect."

"I sincerely hope they have got letters," said Lady Steering nervously. "In any case, will we not inconvenience your mother very much?"

"Oh, no. Little houses have the advantage over big ones—there are usually fewer people to consider in them. Problems are either very acute or they don't exist," said Cicely sunnily. "Sometimes we have no servants at all, but all of us can go into the kitchen and do things. Perhaps I shall

cook your omelette to-night with my own hands. I learned to make a truly French omelette at *Cœur la Reine*, and I'm dying to demonstrate it to my family!"

Lady Steering smiled, as, indeed, it was incumbent on her to smile. Cicely had a way of dissipating difficulties, and in a quite extraordinary fashion Lady Steering found herself depending on her judgment and her prompt activity.

The taxi-driver got them to Streatham Common without mishap or delay, and just before six the whir of the motor awakened the echoes in the quiet little cul-de-sac where the Marshams lived, and drew up at the familiar door.

Cicely's heart was rather full as she peered through the window, to see whether there was any sign of expectation on the part of those inside. To her very great relief the front door was opened by her mother before she had time to alight, and she saw by the expression on her face that she would not need to drop any bombshells of information, and that her letter to her father, written at *Cœur la Reine* on the evening of her wedding-day, had arrived.

"Oh, Mummy!" she cried with a little sob in her throat; and, tumbling out of the taxi with a very childish haste, threw herself into her mother's arms.

"My dear, my darling child, you have arrived! I wish you had wired or written, so that some of us could have met you."

"We did. We did everything! But things don't come. But Daddy has got my letter, hasn't he?"

"Yes—only this morning. It upset us all terribly, Cicely; but—but who is here with you?"

"Lady Steering, mother. Don't ask any questions, but just come down and take her in. She is an old dear, but—but very Victorian," she added, muffling a smile against her mother's breast. "She's taking me down to Deverills to-morrow. She thinks I belong—I'm telling you these things in a hurry, mother, so that you mayn't make any too awful *faux pas*, but we shall never get the situation quite clear, though we talk till the Day of Doom!"

"Lady Steering!" repeated Mrs. Marsham, holding back a little. "And you?"

"Oh! I'm Lady Steering too. It's the dowager Lady Steering in the taxi. Do excuse me, dear," she called back over her shoulder. "You see, I haven't seen Mummy for three months, and I'm feeling just like I used to feel when I came home from Neuilly in my school days."

With that, they both marched out to the gate, and Mrs. Marsham was duly introduced, and a few minutes later the little suburban house had received the lady of Deverills Manor.

It was the smallest house in which she

had ever been a guest, but it did not lack a certain charm. The rooms were insignificant, but they were furnished and arranged with a fine taste. Mrs. Marsham, when leaving Lesterford, had not committed the mistake of carrying with her into obscurity huge and unwieldy pieces of furniture, which would crowd up a small house and make it inconvenient and difficult for human beings to find sufficient space. She had made a very judicious selection, and every article bore the *cachet* of age and dignified use. The few pictures were gems, the mahogany had the polish of centuries on it, a bit of china here and there, or of old silver, stamped it as the abode of gentlefolk.

An immense load was lifted from Blanche Steering's mind. It might be poverty and obscurity, but at least it was all dignified and attractive. Her manner was very gracious as she turned to Mrs. Marsham to express thanks for her kind welcome.

"I expected to have gone home to-day, Mrs. Marsham, but dear Cicely insisted on bringing me here first. I see now, it was the wise, the right thing, to do. We have much to talk over, about the sad circumstances which have brought us together."

"My husband only got Cicely's letter this morning, Lady Steering. It was, of course, a great blow to him. He will not recover for some time, I'm afraid. When we lent Cicely to France we hardly expected this—and she is the baby. Tony has three days' leave," she added, "and he will be in presently. Ann gets home about seven. I hope Lady Steering won't mind a war-supper, as we had not notice enough to prepare an elaborate dinner."

"I don't eat it," said Lady Steering graciously. "We are very careful at Deverills, too. I was afraid this invasion, especially if unexpected, would upset you too much, and I wanted to go to an hotel, and ask you to come to dinner there, and discuss the situation."

"Oh! that would have been impossible, Lady Steering. Cicely in a London hotel and her home here!" said Mrs. Marsham, ready to uphold the dignity and the claim of her suburban home with a spirit which secretly delighted Cicely beyond measure. All the boys being out of the house, there were plenty of bedrooms available, and Lady Steering was escorted to the largest one, and waited on solicitously by Cicely, who, having pledged her word to Caroline, who, having pledged her word to her duty, was determined not to fail in her duty.

But at the back of her mind was an overwhelming desire to take her mother-in-law out of the wrappings of cotton-wool and try to get her to take a wider interest in life, and break away from the traditions that, so far, had ruled her absolutely.

The visit to Streatham Common, she felt,



"'Sacrifice? Would you call it that,
Mr. Marsham?' said Lady Steering"—p. 323.

Drawn by
Stanley Dulac

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might pave the way for her good and sound intentions; her great desire was that Lady Steering should be made to see life as it was, stripped of extraneous trappings, and made to understand that the more simply and bravely it is lived the better for all.

She was like a child in her glee, dancing from room to room, looking at everything. After she was able to leave Lady Steering to finish her own toilet, she ran to find her mother once more.

"Oh! Mummy! Mummy darling! Isn't this an awful thing that has happened to me? What did Daddy say?"

"Your father felt it so acutely that I didn't dare to speak to him. Can you tell me all about it now? We haven't got much to eat to-night, but it can't be improved now. It's the half-holiday, you remember, Cicely. All the shops are closed."

"I hadn't remembered, and, anyhow, it doesn't matter. She eats very little. I rather think they are the sort of people who have one cutlet served on a vast silver dish, with two footmen to hand it."

"Two footmen! Are they rich, then, Cicely?"

"No; poor, frightfully poor. But they are the sort who cling not to one another, but to trappings, don't you know? Never mind them now, Mummy. Tell me about everybody. When did you hear from Jack, and is Tony really here? Lady Steering will stand aghast at his Tommy's uniform. And dear old Ann? Oh! there is Daddy at the gate!"

We must pass over the meeting. Its pathos and heart-break proved the depths and tenderness of the bond between that father and daughter.

When Lady Steering descended the narrow stairs and saw the figure of Roger Marsham in the hall, and felt the charm of his fine courtesy and breeding, the last load was lifted from her tortured mind.

For she could hold her head up very high when she took this sweet flower to bloom at Deverills. No Chievely had ever brought home a more winsome bride, nor one who so completely fitted the traditions of the house.

Poor Cicely was not concerned with that side of things at all, but merely with how she was going to make life worth living in the strange, new setting to which inexorable destiny had introduced her.

CHAPTER XIII

The Marshams and Lady Steering

BLANCHE, Lady Steering, had not often eaten cold mutton and salad for her evening meal, and was surprised to find that it tasted good.

No apology was made for it. Though usually fussy, an odd change came over

Mrs. Marsham in the presence of her guest, and she decided that, for Cicely's sake, they must take the high hand. So the few remarks she dropped were intended to indicate that they did not regard her marriage as anything but a kind of disaster, something to be endured and not gloried in.

Ann, who came in late, sat down to eat in her business skirt and blouse, and was very matter-of-fact, and not in the least impressed. Still later, the dining-room door opened, and a tall, slim, but very handsome lad, wearing an ill-fitting uniform, asked whether he might be allowed something to eat.

"I was at the Oval, mother, and they didn't finish up till nearly seven," he said apologetically.

"This is our youngest boy, Anthony, Lady Steering, commonly called Tony," said Mrs. Marsham. "He is a private in a London regiment, and is in camp at Crowborough. He has three days' leave. So fortunate Cicely arrived before he had to go."

"Hallo, old girl!" said Tony, as he kissed his sister, after duly saluting Lady Steering.

Then they settled down to the table again, and Tony was quite willing to talk about his life at Crowborough Camp.

"Like it? Oh, well, it's good in parts—like the curate's egg," he answered Lady Steering. "Bits of it are top hole, and the rest—well, the less said the better. It's got to be done, that's all."

There was courage, cheerfulness, and a kind of delightful matter-of-factness about them all which filled Lady Steering with more and more wonder. She was introduced to a totally new kind of atmosphere and could hardly believe that once the Marshams, in residence at Lesterford, had been bound by the trammels of country life.

There was something of a shock about so many new sensations, and she was not sure yet whether she liked them. But there was an undoubted charm about the whole family, and, oddly enough, Lady Steering liked Mrs. Marsham least, although she more nearly conformed to the conventional standard which Lady Steering had been taught to consider the only possible one.

Ann babbled freely of her work at the Pensions Office. Since she had become a Government servant, and was earning such good money, she and her mother had got on much better, and were learning to appreciate one another.

After supper, Mr. and Mrs. Marsham retired to the drawing-room with Lady Steering to talk over things, while Cicely and Ann and Tony crowded into the little den half-way up the stairs to discuss matters.

Roger Marsham, most gentle and courteous of men, had never appeared more severe than when this strange marriage came under review. "Trapped" was the

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word he had used, in a very rare burst of anger, that morning, on perusal of Cicely's letter. He was more guarded now, but hardly more cordial.

"Your son is dead, Lady Steering, but I must say that I shall always regret that there was no one at hand to dissuade him from asking such a sacrifice from my daughter."

"Sacrifice? Would you call it that, Mr. Marsham?" said Lady Steering, bridling a little and glancing significantly round the little room, which even the Lesterford touch could hardly make imposing. "After all, what did she sacrifice?"

"Her youth and light-heartedness. She has taken on fresh responsibilities, I fear. A widow, at twenty-two, Lady Steering, and without ever having known the happiness we have known!"

He glanced affectionately at his wife, for, though they differed on almost every subject, their love had been without a flaw.

"Only a great love can justify such a step," he went on steadily. "My child was carried away by her compassion for your poor boy, yet it would have been kinder to us all, but most of all to herself, if she had held out."

Lady Steering felt for the moment nonplussed. She had come prepared to be gracious, if a trifling condescending, to the suburban household, and, in a manner, to make the best of a situation she deplored, but Cicely's parents had immediately taken the initiative, and she sat dumb before them.

Mrs. Marsham, reading her transparent mind quite easily, stepped into the breach.

"What you say is quite true, Roger; but, after all, it is done and can't be undone. And Lady Steering could not help it. It seems to me that we had better leave off saying uncharitable things and consider Cicely's future now."

The hint was significant, and Lady Steering was not slow to grasp it.

"After all, dear Cicely has not really lost or surrendered much," she said quietly. "And there are assets on the other side—Deverills, for instance. You have never seen Deverills? I think dear Cicely told me Lesterford is quite at the other side of the county."

"That is so. But what can a child like Cicely do with a large house in the country? Besides, it is your home, and as long as the war lasts she will wish to do national work of some kind."

"Deverills is a large house, and there is room in it for us both, surely," said Lady Steering sweetly. "I am not difficult to live with. Anyone will tell you that I can efface myself. Cicely will have her due at Deverills, Mr. Marsham, you may be quite sure of that."

"We are not so much concerned with that," said Mr. Marsham, still obviously un-

impressed. "What plans have you, then? Do you expect that Cicely will settle down quietly at Deverills? I am afraid it is hardly likely or possible."

"At least, she must make trial of the place and of us. Giles left her in my care, and she will have to take her place as his widow there, for a time at least. That much, I think, is due to the name she has taken."

"Well, well, we must leave her to decide," said Mr. Marsham rather wearily. "I am deeply sorry for you, but we all of us could have done without this complication, Lady Steering. I trust you will find us reasonable to deal with. Naturally, we think we have first claim on Cicely, but now, as I say, she must be left to decide."

Having got this unpleasant load off his mind in some degree, Mr. Marsham resumed his ordinary mien, and did his utmost to make his guest feel at home in their simple house.

No one was more surprised than Mrs. Marsham at the attitude her husband had taken up. It compelled her to a secret respect, however. She was impressed, as the lesser mind generally is, by the title, and the air of importance which Lady Steering assumed. She seldom gave much thought to the deeper issues, and, woman-like, would not have hesitated to tell Cicely's father that a young war-widow of Cicely's attractions was not likely to be handicapped by what had happened.

Lady Steering retired upstairs early, to ponder in her comfortable bed on the extraordinary vagaries of people.

After Lady Steering was safely housed in the privacy of her bedroom, a family conclave took place in the den with the door firmly shut. It made rather a pretty picture—the father and mother on the sofa, Cicely on a divan stool at their feet, Ann in the creaky basket-chair, and Tony leaning against the mantel, surveying the scene with the half-amused, half-tender light in his eyes.

Tony, youngest of the family, loved his home with a passionate love, and his mother most dearly of all. Although an attractive boy, he had had no love affairs yet, even of the mildest kind, and his whole allegiance belonged to the little Streatham house, and all it stood for. He was immensely proud of his sisters, and Ann was his special pal. She had understood him first about joining up, and had supported him through the slight opposition which his mother had offered.

"Well, and here's a pretty kettle of fish," he said comically. "Nice old girl she is, Cis, but—but to live always with her in the dignified seclusion of her ancestral home!—what price, eh?"

Roger Marsham's fine, beautiful hand fell

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with a caressing touch on Cicely's bright head.

"What do you think, my darling? Have you any views on the situation, which, I must say, Tony sums up rather neatly, though with a singular absence of elegance?"

"Oh, I could do better than that, sir, but, unfortunately, the language of the Army doesn't admit of its free use in the boudoir or the family circle."

"Do be quiet for a minute, if you can, Tony!" said Cicely. "I have views, Daddy. In fact, I'm simply full of them, but they are all subject—"

"To what?" he asked anxiously.

"Well, to what I find when I get down there. It's a sort of voyage of discovery, and if I don't like it—"

"Why, then, you'll come back here, of course?"

"Oh, yes, on flying visits. But there's the war, Daddy, and we're all in it."

She spoke soberly, but with an air of conviction that was at once pathetic and convincing.

"Your mother-in-law will oppose any advance on democratic lines," observed Tony wickedly.

"I wonder?" said Cicely, and fell to thinking again, with her cheek resting on the palm of her father's hand. "You ought to see Caroline, Tony. She's my trump card. The only really unselfish thing I've been guilty of in this new campaign was when I helped her at the jumping-off place."

"Whatever are you talking about, child?" her mother asked.

"Well, you see, Caroline, twenty-seven years of age, frightfully strong-minded and capable, and such a dear, has never in her whole life been permitted to do a single thing she has wanted to do, and when she saw a chance of leaving her mother to someone else's tender mercies, why, she just took it!"

"And have you left her with your aunt at *Cœur la Reine*?"

"No, no. She wouldn't have suited that rôle at all. She would have worried Aunt Georgie. Besides, she didn't want any sort of duenna. She wanted to get out on her own. She's working at the Blessington Hut, near Boulogne, serving out teas and coffees and 'woodbines' to Tommy, and oh, won't she love him, and he her?"

"Lady Steering didn't approve of it, then?"

"No, she disapproved most awfully and vigorously. But we managed. It could only be done by my undertaking Deverills for a time."

"Tell us something more about *Cœur la Reine* and Aunt Georgie," suggested Ann.

"It isn't easy to tell about that," answered Cicely soberly. "It has to be seen

and experienced. We haven't told them yet!—Aunt Georgie wants Ann to go out instead of me, mother."

"Does she?" asked Mrs. Marsham in the most lively surprise. "Who would ever have expected that?"

"It's quite natural, after all. It's a great comfort to have somebody belonging, in a place like that, somebody you can let go to. Aunt Georgie and I got on most awfully well, with very occasional tiffs. She's simply splendid, out there, and when she comes back there will be a new Aunt Georgie."

"Would you like to go, Ann?" asked her mother quickly.

"I'm not too fond of Aunt Georgie, but Cicely thinks I ought, and I would like to see a bit of the real thing. Pensions may be useful, but it is not thrilling. Was I to write, Cicely?"

"We didn't arrange anything. You know Aunt Georgie's casual way. She would not be a bit surprised if you just walked in one fine day. She would just say: 'Oh, you've come, Ann,' and ring for Cheetham to bring fresh tea. If you do go, you must stop at Boulogne for a couple of days, and see Caroline. But, of course, there will be a lot of trouble about passports and permits and things, before you accomplish that. We'll have to go into it, and I rather think Aunt Georgie will have to make formal and specific request for you. That will take some time."

When they had all gone upstairs, Cicely ran down again, sure she would find her father alone, smoking his last pipe. She had let down her lovely hair, and it lay in bright waves on the pretty blue of her dressing-gown, and made her look very young and childish. The father's heart, soft where all his children were concerned, overflowed at sight of her, and he took her in his arms.

"My darling, I hoped you would come. I was waiting for you. There is something more to be said—I haven't got at the bottom of this yet. Tell me about it now."

"I can't, Daddy. It's—it's difficult. I just had the feeling that I had to do it."

"But if he had lived?"

"If he had lived it would have been awful, Daddy, for I didn't care for him one little bit."

"He must have cared for you."

"Yes, I think he did, but there wasn't enough for two."

It was a quaint way of putting it, but most convincing.

"Ah, well, it is part of your destiny. You will accept it and make the best of what lies in front. I foresee difficulties, my child. Lady Steering is very gracious and kind, but there is a hardness beneath. She will try to mould you into her pattern."



"'I can't, Daddy. It's—it's difficult. I just
had the feeling that I had to do it.'"

Drawn by
Stanley Denton

THE QUIVER

Probably short visits will be the best for your cordial relations. Our lawyers are to meet to-morrow, she says, for the settling up of everything."

"Daddy," said Cicely quite firmly, "my mind is made up. I won't take anything from the Chievelys. I don't want Lord Steering's money or anything belonging to him. I have no right to it. I didn't even care for him, and if I took anything except his name, which I can't escape from, I should feel like a horrid adventuress."

"But there will be difficulties about that."

"They must be overcome. And you must do it, Daddy," said Cicely. "It is the only way I can preserve my self-respect; besides, they are frightfully poor and need it all for themselves. I shall just stop long enough to get to know the place, and to please poor Lady Steering by being introduced to her friends. Then I'll go back, either to Aunt Georgie or to Caroline. Thank heavens, the war has opened countless doors for the unattached female, and she need never be at a loss."

But even as she spoke there crept over the girl's heart once more the prevision that something awaited her at Deverills, and that destiny had not yet worked its full will with her.

CHAPTER XIV Cicely at Deverills

"PLEASE, m'lady, Barnacle to see you," said the parlour-maid at Deverills, interrupting the cosy *tête-à-tête* breakfast, in what was called the Oak Room. It was really the small library, opening off the other one, and had been used as dining-room by the family almost exclusively since the day of entertaining on a large scale had wholly disappeared.

Instantly Lady Steering's expression changed. She had been talking with animation and complete absorption to Cicely about the departed glories of the house, which had enabled her to forget for a few moments its present embarrassments. Lewis's message recalled them in a somewhat painful flood.

"All right, Lewis, I shall be there directly. It is the bailiff, my dear, and I always emerge depressed and somewhat bewildered from interviewing him. There never seems to be enough of anything for Barnacle's requirements at the farm, from money down to labour. And the way in which implements and everything wear out and have to be replaced by new ones at prodigious cost has made me sympathetic with farmers, though my husband used to say that a contented farmer had never been

seen in this universe, and that if one ever did appear the sight would paralyse the world!"

She smiled a little pathetically as she left the room to the interview which never failed to have precisely the effect she had described. A long succession of bailiffs—as Caroline had once said to Cicely—had proved the principal dispensation in her mother's widowed life. But somehow it had never occurred to Caroline to step into the breach. It had never been done—that was all. The laws of the Medes and Persians guided and controlled the entire destiny of Deverills.

Already, during the few hours she had been in the house, Cicely had proved it. She had been somewhat startled by the size of the house, and her first thought had been how foolish it was for a handful of women to live alone in it, keeping an inadequate staff of servants, while they could have been much happier in a smaller house while they drew the rent of Deverills from richer tenants.

She had a pleasant word and smile for the maid who came to clear the table.

"Lady Steering tells me you have somebody at the front. I hope you have good news of him?"

"Only Field post card, my lady, just lately. He has ten days in the trenches and ten out. I don't suppose you was anywhere near where he was?"

"Where was that, Lewis? Have you any idea?"

"No, my lady. You see, they're not allowed to say."

"I was with the French army," Cicely explained. "Our British lines were not so very far away. It is all very interesting out there, and Miss Caroline simply refused to leave it."

"She'll be splendid, will Miss Caroline, and we all feel we'd like to be there too, doing something for the boys. But, as 'er ladyship says, somebody's got to carry on here. Do you know how many pairs of socks went out from Deverills last winter, my lady?"

"I don't know."

"A hundred and twenty-five pairs, and I finished the last one after midnight, in my bedroom, by candle light! And there were other things besides—mittens, and helmets, and body-belts. It was a splendid parcel. 'Er ladyship had a letter from the Queen thanking her."

The little talk threw another sidelight on Deverills and its orderly, placid tide of life. Cicely, after a few more kindly words, passed out through the casement window to the stone terrace behind, where a gorgeous peacock was sunning himself on the balustrade. It was a beautiful picture—one of the stately homes of England, though

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now sadly shorn of its former glory. Had Cicely loved the man whose name she bore, her heart must have swelled with pride and joy in the heritage he had been called so early to relinquish, but she felt towards it merely as a casual spectator, interested in the passing show. To settle down and live there would have seemed to her at that moment clean impossible.

Presently she heard Lady Steering calling her, and ran along the terrace to the open window. When they met she saw that the lines had deepened on her mother-in-law's face, and that she was obviously nervous.

"Oh, there you are, my dear. I have had a most uncomfortable quarter of an hour. Barnacle really possesses in a greater degree than anyone else I ever met the power to make one feel uncomfortable."

"Then he ought to be dispensed with, dear," said Cicely clearly. "He exercises what story books call a sinister influence, and we have no use for it in this world, especially in war-time."

"Ah, but you see, my dear, a woman in my position is helpless, and bailiffs are increasingly difficult to find. I have had a great many since my husband died, and of a number of evils have tried to choose the least. They always start so fair, and promise so much. But how soon they fade, and one's hopes with them!"

"Tell me, what did the bailiff with the unpleasant name say this morning?" asked Cicely, as she put her hand through her mother-in-law's arm and began to walk her up and down the sunny terrace.

"Well, he began with the shortage of labour. Of course, most of our eligible men are in the Army now. He says it will not be possible to harvest the crop, unless we get imported labour from somewhere."

"Sounds pretty serious. Well, what next?"

"There have been heavy rains while we've been in France, and the best of the crop is laid so flat in places that it means hand-labour to shear. The reaper can't touch it."

"Serious enough, too. Anything else?"

"Oh! he wound up with a general request for more money, more people, more animals, more everything, and threatened to leave unless something could be done to relieve him. And, of course, with the hay almost ready, he must be kept at any price."

"At any price?" repeated Cicely. "Now, I wonder—"

"What do you wonder, my dear?"

"It isn't a sound situation, dear. The person who has to be kept at any price and threatens his employer could not be economically termed an asset to any business."

"Quite right! That is how my husband used to talk. He had a short, sharp way with malcontents, but, then, he was a born administrator. We women are so different, and rather helpless in such a situation. Of

course, it never was intended that we administered anything."

"Not even ourselves," put in Cicely, with a delicious smile which provoked an answering one on Lady Steering's grave face.

"Now, tell me what you said to Mr. Barnacle," said Cicely. "I'm so interested. You don't mind my asking questions?"

"It pleases me very much that you should be so interested. Besides, you have every right."

Cicely made a gesture with her hand as if she would place it on the lips uttering such words.

"Now, dear, you must not—you must *not* really say such things. I won't have them. I'm here simply as a guest for a little while. But I should like to be of some use if I can, and I should most uncommonly like to have a few words with Mr. Barnacle."

"I'm afraid he has gone by now. Why, of course I ought to have taken you into the room and introduced you. But we can repair that omission later by going down to the farm together."

"That would be very nice. I want to see everything while I'm here. Besides, I promised Caroline. But why didn't she tackle Mr. Barnacle? She would have been excellent for him."

"Well, you see, there was always danger of Caroline saying too much; and, besides, I have always interviewed Barnacle. He would not have understood, or, perhaps, tolerated anything else."

"It seems to me, dear, that Mr. Barnacle is the master at Deverills."

"No, no! Most respectful in every way. It is only in his own domain he is inclined to be autocratic, and he is really a quite good servant. He came with the highest references from the Duke of Adderly."

"Perhaps they were too high," suggested Cicely dryly. "But, tell me, does he make the farm pay?"

"Oh, no! I am only thankful when the margin on the wrong side is kept within bounds. I have never heard of a home farm which paid."

"And to keep it going you drain on your capital all the time! I'm only a girl, and my dress-allowance at home was twenty pounds, but Daddy made us keep within it, and we did. Mr. Barnacle should have an allowance, and be made to keep within it."

"It can't be done, my dear. All sorts of exigencies arise. I have sometimes wondered what one would feel if a day should dawn when nothing was asked for, and there was something on the credit side!"

"Don't you see, dear, how wrong it all is, from every point of view?" said Cicely earnestly. "Do you ever go into the books?"

"Well, I look at them, but I don't understand them."

"And won't your lawyer do it for you?"

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"Well, he would, but he knows, just as I do, that some things have to go on, because there is no real remedy."

"But there ought to be one," persisted Cicely. "You are just being robbed of money which you and Caroline need, because you have told me so. And about labour, dear Lady Steering—Barnacle must give the women of the Land Army a chance. They are being trained everywhere now, and will be ready by harvest."

"Women on the land! Why, Barnacle would certainly give notice at the mere suggestion!"

"That might be a very good thing. It would clear the air, and the ground; someone else could be got," said Cicely, and there was an odd look in her eyes. Instantly the way opened up, and she seemed to see in clear vision the reason why she had been brought to Deverills.

Lady Steering shook her head, and her expression indicated that she listened to inexperienced speaking.

Later in the day, when Lady Steering had gone to her room to lie down, as she invariably did from lunch-time till tea-time, Cicely, with a couple of dogs which she had had no difficulty in attaching to her in the course of the morning, set out on a voyage of discovery.

A few questions put to the elderly gardener working about the stable-yard provided her with the necessary directions. Obeying instructions, she crossed the park in a westerly direction, and then plunged through a narrow coppice, which brought her to the open fields, spreading away from the frontage of Steering Hall—the name of the home farm.

When it came in sight she was surprised by the size and importance of the house. Having lived so long in a small suburban dwelling, where every inch of space was precious, and represented just so many pounds of rental in the year, her first feeling was one of wonder and indignation that so desirable a residence should be in the possession of a working bailiff.

It had some features not possessed by Deverills, and, in Cicely's opinion, was far more desirable a place of abode. It was manageable, and also beautiful, rough cast all over, with quaint projecting beams, and a most adorable veranda running round three sides, about which the ramblers hung in glorious profusion. It looked a complete idyll in the clear light of the summer afternoon.

Cicely, in a short skirt of shepherd's plaid, a blazer over her white blouse, and an old Panama hat to shade her eyes, looked a very sportsman-like and purposeful young woman as she approached the place, regarding it with critical eyes. Her mind was both active and original, and already there was growing up in it the skeleton of

a plan which was going to serve Deverills and the family she had so strangely entered. It was very nebulous as yet, but before she left the precincts of Steering Hall it was to be crystallised.

She took stock of the fields, too, and, though her eye was not an expert's eye, she was conscious of an odd, yearning kind of interest in it all.

"I was born on the land. I suppose I am coming back to my first love. Anyhow I'd like to do something here. I think I'll take my courage in both hands and go right up to the house door and ask for Mrs. Barnacle. I wonder if there is a Mrs. Barnacle? Anyhow, it doesn't matter; I'll risk it."

She went round the back of the house for a set purpose, being anxious to take a proper survey of the whole place. All the out-buildings were in good condition, and though some might have considered it a drawback to the house to have them so near, Cicely was fully alive to all the advantages when regarded by really practical eyes.

As she was crossing the farmyard a woman came out by the kitchen door—a slim figure, in a short skirt which revealed silk-clad feet and very high-heeled shoes. It was a bright, rather pert face, with high colour and plenty of highly frizzed, black hair. She stepped forward with an air of authority, to inquire the intruder's business.

"Good afternoon," said Cicely sweetly. "Am I by any chance speaking to Mrs. Barnacle?"

It was an arrow shot in the dark, but it went home. She had never seen Mrs. Barnacle; had no idea whether she was young, middle-aged, or elderly.

"I am Mrs. Barnacle," answered the young woman. "And you?"

"I? Oh! I come from Deverills. I am Lady Steering."

"Lady Steering! The new Lady Steering?" said Mrs. Barnacle, obviously taken aback. She had heard part at least of the story of young Lord Steering's strange marriage in a French hospital, and also, that the real Lady Steering had returned to Deverills with her widowed daughter-in-law. But she certainly had not expected a visit from her in such an unconventional way, nor to see her so young.

"Yes, I suppose I am rather new. May I come in for a few minutes, Mrs. Barnacle? I have had quite a good walk over, and I think I did not find the straight path, after all."

Mrs. Barnacle was more than pleased. She took Lady Steering through a little white walk which led into the front garden, a really beautiful place, with green terraced slopes leading down to a fine and extremely well-kept tennis lawn, on the beauty of which Cicely remarked.

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"Presently Barnacle, as if divining that he was wanted, opened the door and presented himself"—p. 330.

Drawn by
Stanley Dulac.

"Yes, it is quite good, but we haven't played so much as usual this year, because there aren't the partners, and I find that girls don't care for it much unless they can have proper partners."

"I suppose they don't, naturally," asserted Cicely, at the same time asking herself the futile question, "What is the salary of a farm bailiff, and what is his social status?"

She was very curious about the interior of Steering Hall, and not disappointed with the features which belonged to the house. But the furniture, according to her standard, was atrocious. In the drawing-room, to which Mrs. Barnacle introduced her with considerable pride, there was highly decorated furniture in imitation of the French style, badly made, too ornate, altogether unsuitable for the house or the inmates.

But Mrs. Barnacle, obviously proud of it, drew up the blinds that had been drawn to preserve the colours of the carpet.

"I've been here just four and a half years, Lady Steering," she said, in answer to Cicely's question. "I come from Lon-

don. My people are in business in London—the furniture line, in Tottenham Court Road. That is why we were able to get nice things at a reasonable price. I don't care much for the country myself, it is very dull in the winter, but I get a good many visitors in summer."

The Barnacles were not at all a good type of people for the post, Barnacle, though a farmer's son, having spent his youth in racing stables, and been engaged in a good many shady transactions. He had never lost the passion for betting and gambling, and naturally required considerable profits to enable him to operate in that particular field. He had come to Lady Steering with good credentials, however, and, being a strong, domineering kind of man, had managed to get her under his thumb to a certain extent.

Gertie Barnacle, though not at all sure of her ground, ventured on a remark in the nature of sympathy regarding Cicely's recent loss.

"It must have been awful for you out there, Lady Steering. We were all very sorry when we heard about it."

"Thank you very much," said Cicely quietly. "Were you here when Lord Steering was at home?"

"Oh, no. Mr. Barnacle has only been here five years. We married almost directly he took the post."

"And is he happy here? Does he like the work?"

Mrs. Barnacle hesitated a moment, wondering how far she might go.

"Well, you see, the place really needs a lot of money spent upon it, and Lady Steering doesn't understand. It would be so different if there was a squire."

"I suppose it would. Could I take a walk round, Mrs. Barnacle, and perhaps I may meet your husband?"

"Oh! he's in, Lady Steering. We were just having a cup of tea in the parlour. I'll tell him."

Presently Barnacle, as if divining that he was wanted, opened the door and presented himself.

He was a short, thickset man, of the bulldog type of face, thick, dark hair, plentifully streaked with grey, and a very wide, tenacious mouth. Cicely conceived a dislike and distrust of him at once—for them both, indeed, but was careful not to show it.

Barnacle was civil, but not too respectful. He behaved exactly like a man who imagined his position absolutely secure and his services indispensable. Though interested in the slim girl before him, it never occurred to him that she could possibly be weighing him up, and that, from the moment her clear eyes looked through and through him, his official days at Steering Hall were numbered.

CHAPTER XV

In whic' Cicely Takes a Big Step

THREE was nothing of the slackness about Cicely. Her thoughts kept pace with her hastening feet as she walked back across the shining summer fields to Derrylls. It was half-past four before she reached it, and was informed by Lewis in the hall that her ladyship's tea had just been taken to the boudoir.

"Do I go there, Lewis?" she asked, with her sweet smile which disarmed everybody, and won for her most of the things on which she happened to set her heart.

"Miss Caroline used to, my lady, and the tray is laid for two."

"All right," said Cicely, and bounded up the stairs two steps at a time, Lewis looking after her with a somewhat puzzled expression on her face.

There was very little evidence of overwhelming grief about the new-made widow, and the servants' hall had not yet quite made up its mind about the story. That it

interested them tremendously, down to the smallest detail, goes without saying.

Cicely opened the boudoir door and peeped in.

"I hope I haven't kept you waiting. I've been for ever such a nice walk, and seen heaps of interesting things, among them Mr. and Mrs. Barnacle."

"Dear child, how and where? I suppose you met them out walking in the village, perhaps?" asked Lady Steering, a trifle breathlessly.

"Oh, no; I've been to Steering Hall. I felt so interested in what you told me about it, and in Barnacle, that I simply felt I must see them. What a sweet place it is! I even wondered why you and Caroline have not let this tremendous house and gone to stay there."

"We never thought of it," said Lady Steering, struck by the suggestion. "We might have done that; but, then, so long as I expected my son might return any moment, it would not have been good to make such a change."

"Oh! why not? He would have loved the old Hall, I am sure. Didn't he love it as a little boy?"

"I can't remember. But come, tell me what happened? Did you call at the house?"

"Not exactly, though I think I would have done in due course. I was taking a survey of the back premises when Mrs. Barnacle came out. I suppose you know all about Mrs. Barnacle?"

"Indeed, I do not. I called on her when she came first, with Caroline, but neither of us was favourably impressed by her. She seemed pert, and not at all a very suitable wife for a working bailiff."

"She has a beautiful drawing-room," said Cicely demurely, "furnished in the Empire style, out of the Tottenham Court Road. Barnacle came in too. He isn't at all a nice man, I am sure. I didn't take to either of them. It seems to me that they live very well and very fat at Steering Hall. Would you think it very impertinent if I asked you how much you pay him?"

"Not at all, my child; you have every right to know. He has a hundred a year and his house and perquisites."

"What are the perquisites?"

"Well, really, dear, I could not specify them. A horse, for one thing, and potatoes and milk and butter, after we are supplied here."

"I suppose he keeps accounts and submits them regularly?"

"I don't know. I have never been strong enough to go into these things. We must trust those we employ, my dear, or there can never be any peace."

"That's all right up to a point, but surely we have to prove them worthy of trust first," said Cicely, enjoying the delicious crumpets

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and the delicate blend of tea, which was the only one Lady Steering could digest. "Anyhow, I wouldn't trust Mr. Barnacle very far, and I am sure you lose money by him. But there, it is really no business of mine, only it interests me frightfully. Tell me, dear Lady Steering, when shall I see Joyce?"

"She will come over to-morrow for certain. I can't think why she hasn't come to-day."

"Is she happy in her hospital work?"

"She does not make any complaint. But I think that she wishes there was a little more nursing and a little less washing-up."

"I do hope she will come to-morrow. I want to see her dreadfully!"

"Do you, dear? Then you are not finding Deverills so impossible, after all?"

Cicely smiled.

"It is a most beautiful place. I'm sure this is much the finest part of the county. Lesterford was very flat, and your woods are a dream!"

Lady Steering's sensitive cheek flushed at this praise. Cicely had no idea how anxious her mother-in-law was to win her approval for Deverills and all it stood for.

Joyce arrived on her bicycle next day, in time for lunch. Cicely's heart thrilled at sight of her, and she marvelled that two so different as Caroline and her could have sprung from the same stock.

Caroline's physique and features came down a long way from the days when the Chievelys had been real workers on the land, and not merely inheritors. Joyce Chievely's likeness to her brother was so marked as to give Cicely something of a shock. There was the same happy-go-lucky way, the debonair smile, the gay, irresponsible outlook on life. She was but a child yet, however, with no experience of life, though the new times with their poignant accompaniments were providing daily opportunity.

They kissed one another spontaneously, and little Joyce's eyes were full of a kind of wistful pity. She did not know so much about her brother's misdeeds as Caroline; to her he had been more or less a hero of romance, as those are who have surrounded themselves with a halo of mystery. She expected to see her new sister-in-law clothed in the garments of woe, and betraying her sorrow in her looks. But there was nothing of the kind about Cicely.

Seeing the look of wonder on the child's face, her mother felt as if she must apologise or explain.

"Dear Cicely hasn't got her things yet, but they will come soon. You are looking tired and pale, my child. I suppose you feel the heat?"

"Yes, I do. I'm what the Tommies call 'fed up,' mother," said Joyce, still lookin

with admiration and keen inquiry at the new inmate of the family.

So far she had not ventured on a single remark of a personal kind. She felt the situation demanded it, and yet Cicely did not seem to expect it. She was smiling and joyous, and apparently very well pleased to see her.

Youth demands its own kin and kind for companionship, and when denied will serve itself elsewhere. Instantly there was established between these two young creatures that mysterious comradeship which needs neither introduction nor preliminary. They understood one another at the moment of meeting, accepted one another, and were rendered happy thereby.

"Do they still work you as hard?" the anxious mother asked.

Like some others, she had rather resented that there was no difference made between Miss Chievely of Deverills and the saddler's daughter in Much Havers, when they started side by side under the Red Cross flag.

"Oh, frightfully! And Matron is so hard to please. If—if it wasn't such a jolly mean thing to do—not playing the game, you know, Cicely—I'd come home."

Cicely's eyes grew brighter and brighter, and she inwardly felt that the fates were being propitious, and playing into her hands. She was impatient for the moment when Lady Steering would retire for her post-prandial rest, and she would have an opportunity to talk to Joyce alone.

It seemed to take longer than usual. It was quite half-past two before Lady Steering was at last upstairs in the safe custody of the maid.

"Let's go and sit on the balustrade and feed the peacocks," suggested Cicely. "They haven't any names, your mother tells me, so I've christened them Antony and Cleopatra. I'm not without hopes of getting them to answer to these important titles."

Joyce laughed, and they entwined their arms and emerged into the sunlight, a perfect picture of youth at its fairest, a sight to gladden any eyes that happened to behold them. But there were no eyes save those of Antony and Cleopatra, whose bright glances indicated merely greed for tit-bits from the table.

After a while the sunshine wearied them, and Joyce suggested they should go into the spinney, which spread away from the back of the house. There they found a little dell near the stream, and sat themselves down to discuss things.

"I haven't been able to do my work properly for thinking about all that was going on here," Joyce confided to her newly found relative. "When I heard that mother and Caroline had gone to France, you know, I just cried with sheer rage! I wanted so badly to go."

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"France is good," said Cicely, with a lingering tenderness in her voice, "especially when you know it as I do. I want dreadfully to go back, and I envy Caroline with all my heart. But I somehow don't think—indeed, I know—there isn't the slightest chance of it."

"What are you going to do, then? Stop here with mother? If you do, I believe I'll come home."

"That would be really lovely. But haven't you signed on for the duration?" asked Cicely.

"No. If you're a member of the V.A.D., then you're a voluntary, aren't you, and can go when you like? Matron doesn't like me, Cicely, and gives me all the horrid work to do, and none of the nice things. I've never been allowed to handle a bandage, or do anything really for the men. You wouldn't believe how horrid one woman can be to another!"

"Oh, yes, I can. But in this case I don't understand it," Cicely responded. "There must be a reason."

Joyce's face flushed a little.

"Well, there is. But I won't be bad enough to talk about it," said Joyce, and it was not till long after that Cicely learned that Joyce had won too much admiration from one of the surgeons whom the Matron considered her special property.

"If you are fed up to the degree you suggest, I wonder—"

"You wonder what?"

"Whether we couldn't do something together."

"What kind of a thing?"

Cicely did not immediately answer, for she felt the ground to be rather delicate. Her next remark fairly perplexed Joyce; it seemed apropos of nothing.

"I'm an interloper, and none of you seem to mind. It's extraordinary! Caroline was so kind to me, it makes me want to cry every time I think of it. What an out-and-out dear she is! And how glad I am she's getting a chance in France!"

"But how could we help it? We're just being ordinarily decent, and nothing more," said Joyce. "Mother thinks you are simply splendid. She wrote to me from the chateau with the queer name, and said all sorts of nice things about you."

"I didn't deserve them. I don't in the least know why I married your brother, Joyce. I want to say just one or two things to you, same as I said to Caroline, to clear the air. I didn't think about him in that way in the least; we had only chaffed a little, and it was a tremendous big thing to do. I had only a quarter of an hour to make up my mind, but, somehow, I just knew I had to do it. I knew I had to come here, too, though I didn't want to do that in the least either. But now I seem to see in it some sort of ordered plan.

To-day I had some light. Tell me, Joyce, do you know Mr. Barnacle?"

"Barnacle? Do you mean mother's bailiff at the Hall?"

"That's the gentleman," said Cicely, with a faint, far-away smile on her lips.

"What has he got to do with anything?"

"Quite a lot. He may quite easily turn out to be the *raison d'être* of me. Barnacle is robbing your mother right and left, Joyce, aided and abetted by Mrs. B. And I rather think it's going to be my job—mine and yours—to stop him."

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Joyce. "What an extraordinary idea!"

"All truth is extraordinary, I find, until you take hold of it, and then it is the only thing. I've only been here forty-eight hours, Joyce, but I've got the hunger for the land on me badly. Reversion to type, perhaps! I've been dying for you to come. Leave the hospital, Joyce, help me to get Mr. Barnacle nobbled by the military, then we'll go to Steering Hall and run it ourselves to our immense satisfaction and your mother's amazing profit."

Joyce stared at Cicely's face as if she thought she was not quite right in her head.

"There is patriotic service of all sorts for women, and this on the land is going to be one of the biggest and most important branches. It's just in its infancy, but as the men get taken we shall have to step into every breach."

"Do you think the war is going to last for ever, then?"

"The first seven years will be the worst," answered Cicely without the smallest smile. "Does the idea appeal? I almost feel that I could do it alone, but if we did it together it would be—why, simply the most splendid thing in the world! We'll establish a school, and get a lot of girl recruits, and make a revolution in agriculture, and, incidentally, show up hinderers like Barnacle and Co."

"Why, Cicely, how can you ever think of such things, and what would mother say?" replied the girl quickly.

"I think of them because we've all got to think now, and to some definite purpose. Your mother? She will have to be persuaded first to let us try, and then convinced by results. We are the New Age knocking at the door, Joyce. Don't you feel it?"

"I don't feel anything but just fed up with the hospital, and I should like to do every single thing you say. But there's mother—we'll have to get her to consent first. I do believe that will be the hardest part of the whole scheme."

But it proved much less difficult than they imagined. Most lions in the path of progress lie down quite quietly when they are properly faced and shown that their objections cannot hold.

AN ENGLISH ROSE



Given by
Sister of the

"They entwined their arms and emerged into the sunlight, a perfect picture of youth"—p. 331.

Cicely, who felt herself developing all sorts of diplomatic powers in the strange new environment to which she had come, was far too astute to begin by quarrelling with Barnacle or making a scene about him. Reflecting that what is done can't be undone, she decided that the past, as far as Mr. Barnacle was concerned, should be wiped out, and that he should be given a chance to redeem his character and build up a new standard in the Army.

She had heard, in the course of conversation with his wife, that he had secret leanings towards active service, and, had he not considered himself indispensable to Lady Steering, would have joined Kitchener's Army.

Cicely quickly found out that it was possible to approach the military authorities through Lady Steering. To discover them was quite easy, and by the exercise of a little diplomacy she got her to invite two of them to lunch one Sunday when Joyce was at home.

During the meal she studied them closely, and decided that the adjutant, a Scotsman, called Elphinstone, was the most likely to be useful for the furtherance of her project. She was never in a hurry about anything, and after lunch, when they had gone out to make acquaintance with Antony and Cleopatra, she broached the subject.

"Captain Elphinstone, I want you to help me about something."

"Yes, Lady Steering?"

Once more Cicely started slightly at the name. She found it difficult to get used to it, and had no idea what importance the mere title imparted to her in the eyes of many.

Elphinstone was a middle-aged bachelor, and his somewhat stolid face gave no indication of his susceptibility to the charms of the other sex. He was immensely pleased at this mark of Cicely's friendliness, though that also he carefully disguised, after the manner of his race.

"You will, won't you?" she asked, with

THE QUIVER

an adorable turn of her head, missing any hint of promise or enthusiasm in his cautious reply.

"Of course, it's what I'm here for," he answered hastily, saying more now than the occasion warranted. Then she unfolded her plan.

Elphinstone was a landowner himself, in the East of Scotland, and the picture she drew of Barnacle's real or imaginary deprivations interested him mightily.

"I don't want to have any sort of disturbance, nor to upset Lady Steering, but if you could only persuade him to join the Army, by going and telling him it is men like him you need," she added, with a delicious little turn of her head, "I'd be for ever grateful."

"I can do it, I think. I've seen the man—at least, I've heard of him. Of course, it's quite well known that he's feathering his nest at Steering Hall. But I don't think we shall have much difficulty with Barnacle. I

know his kidney. What I'm not so sure about is your ability to supplant him successfully."

"Is it so hard, then?" asked Cicely innocently. "One can read books, and get expert advice from other sources. Don't be a wet blanket, Captain Elphinstone! And if you are at Collisay Barracks I could ask you things. I gathered from what you were saying to Lady Steering at lunch that you managed your big estate yourself before the war."

Elphinstone smiled.

"That's a different matter from establishing an agricultural school with lady students, and making it profitable," he remarked.

"But think how interesting it would be, and what a relief from the barracks square," she said, her sweet eyes overrunning with laughter.

What could poor Elphinstone do but fall in?

[END OF CHAPTER FIFTEEN]

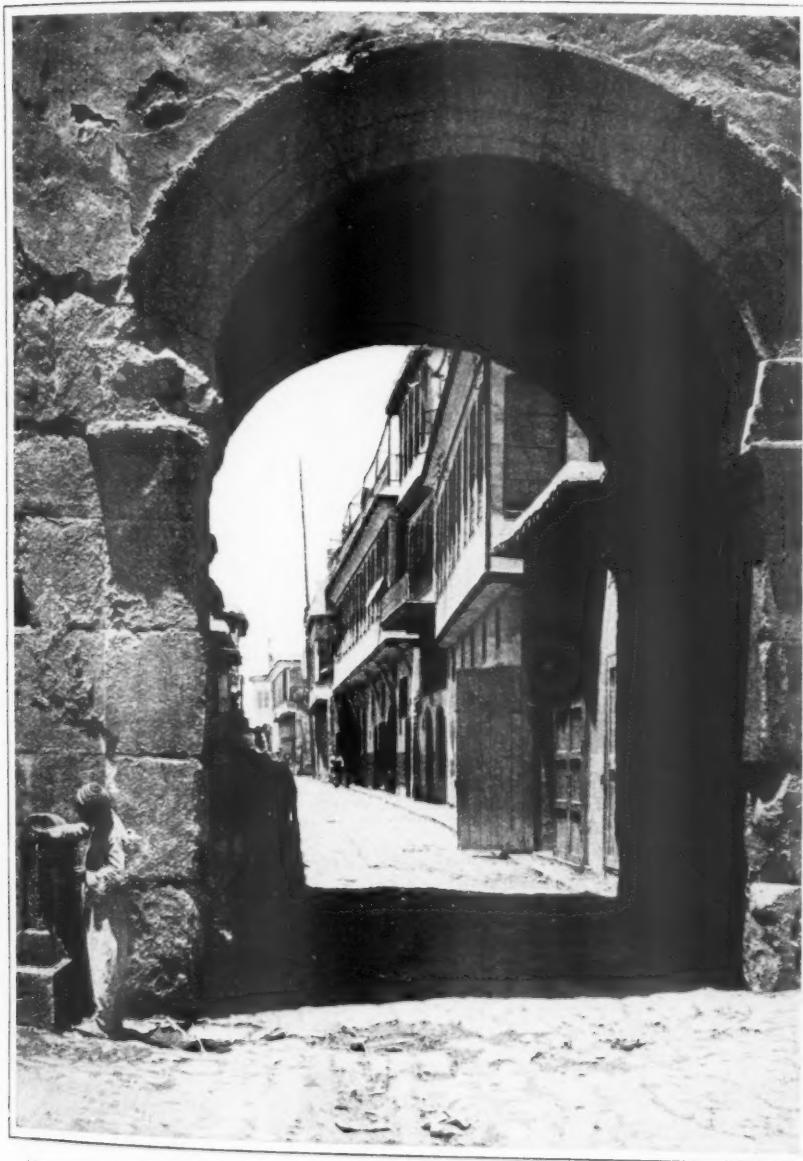


Haifa, and the Bay of Acre,
from the Summit of Mount Carmel.

Photo
D. M. Smith.

The seaport and town of Acre sustained many sieges during the Crusades, and was successfully defended against Napoleon by the garrison and British sailors under Sir Sidney Smith.

THE CAPTURE OF THE HOLY LAND



Damascus: The Eastern Gate
and "Street called Straight."

Photo:
D. McLovish.

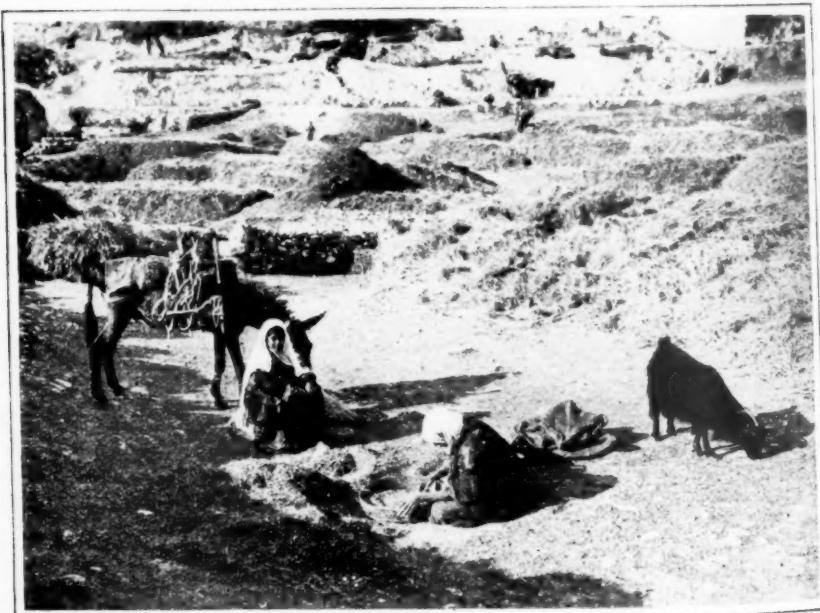
The invasion of Palestine by British troops has been followed with enormous interest. The surrender of Jerusalem marks an epoch in the world's history. Exactly four centuries after its capture by the Turks it fell into the hands of the British, and the "abomination of desolation" ceased.



Jerusalem: The Damascus Gate.

Photo: D. M. Lish.

General Allenby entered the Holy City on December 11, accompanied by representatives of France and Italy.



Typical Scene in the Country through which our Troops passed on their way to Jerusalem.

Photo: D. M. Lish.



A Street in Bethlehem.

Photo: D. Mcleish.

Welsh and Home County troops advanced from Bethlehem on December 8, whilst other troops
bombed in the city from the north. Thus isolated, Jerusalem fell on December 9—the
anniversary of its capture by Judas Maccabeus 2,070 years ago.



THE THINGS WE CAN'T DO

A Talk on Limitations

By AN ORDINARY WOMAN

HERE comes a time in the lives of most women when the great gap between the things they would like to have done and the things they have accomplished is so wide that they are tempted to give up in despair.

A woman's life is so hedged around with limitations. The man can get out into the world ; he has his possibilities of service on so many fields ; but a woman with her home ties, the needs of her children, the thousand and one interruptions to which she is subject, often feels that life holds nothing for her but hindrances and limitations.

What Can be Done

It is an enormous source of encouragement to remember what women every day are accomplishing, in spite of physical and family burdens that are enough to break the heart of any creature.

I call to mind one of the most popular writers of the day, a woman whose cheery words do much to entertain and help thousands of readers. To read her writings one would imagine that she was a woman of the world, healthy, well-travelled, mixing in delightful society. As a matter of fact, she is an invalid, confined to her chair, and only able on special occasions to venture outside the precincts of her little home. Yet she manages to keep abreast of the times, to retain her warm interest in human

doings, and in story after story to take the reader into a bright and joyous world. She has triumphed over her circumstances.

All the Same

At the same time, sooner or later the wise woman learns that there are things that she cannot do. It is all very well to talk of the woman novelist, but there are thousands of women who, with the greatest will in the world, cannot write. It is a gift given to few. So with music and art. How often does it happen that a woman will set her heart on some achievement—in scholarship, art, or music—for which she is endowed with only a limited talent ! Possibly in some other direction she would be able to do good work, but, by a strange perversion of human nature, it is *this* one thing she wants and will have, and so she leaves the sphere of the possible, and spends her hopes and her time on what after all can only be an impossible fantasy.

The same thing happens in regard to time—perhaps more so than talents. The ambitious woman starts out to do many things in the twenty-four hours of the day. There is the home, war-work, the shopping, the calls to make, church activities, and social claims. Too often she fails altogether, simply by attempting too much. She has the best will in the world, but does not recognise the limitations of time.

THE THINGS WE CAN'T DO

My Temptation

I suppose I ought not to be "laying down the law" like this, for of all people in the world my temptation is constantly to undertake more than I can perform. Before the war I was very much interested in the activities of a particular church, and being willing, and—I suppose I may say it about myself?—fairly capable, I found I was constantly in demand. There were all sorts of jobs that I was only too willing to take on. The Mothers' Meeting needed help, and the Girls' Guild, the Sewing Meeting, and the Young Helpers' League, and into one and all I flung myself with more zeal than discretion.

Then came the endless committee meetings. Oh! how much time is wasted on committees! When will good people learn the wisdom of the committee of one?

The result may be imagined. Not only was the work badly done, but in a few short months I had a breakdown, and was forced to relinquish the whole of my church work.

The Health Handicap

Many women find they are severely handicapped by health. If carefully harnessed they have about as much physical strength as will take them through the ordinary tasks of the day. But this is not enough. They long to be of use in the great outside world, and cannot resist claims here and there, excitements of one kind and another. And then comes collapse; perhaps a long illness, followed by a period of depression of spirits not only irksome to the sufferer herself, but exceedingly trying to those about her.

How thankful I am for the general run of good health I have had throughout my life—a heritage which, I am thankful to say, has been handed on to my children. But I have found, again and again, the wisdom of cutting down, the frank recognition of the things I cannot do. It has often meant a bitter struggle. I have longed to be up and doing, but after events have shown the wisdom of attempting fewer things, and doing them well.

If we feel the limitations of our own lives, how much more do we recognise them in dealing with other people!

I suppose the hardest task ever set a mother is to stand aside and see her daughter

make mistakes—to stand aside and take no action. I freely confess that, being of an energetic disposition, again and again I have stopped my daughters at some little task they were performing badly, and with my more capable hands have done the thing myself.

Where I was Wrong

Yet I realised it was wrong. My children would have to make their mistakes and learn, sadly and slowly, what after all had taken me years of slow plodding to acquire.

And if that were the case with the household duties, how much more was it so when they came to the great parting of the ways, when love and life knocked at the doors of their hearts! How I longed to settle things for them in what appeared to me to be the wisest way. Yet there are severe limitations over a mother's influence. We can guide, counsel, suggest; but these children of ours have their own way to make, and beyond the initial stages we parents are powerless.

The same thing seems to be the case in helping people. How many times my husband and I have gone out of our way to help people in distress—mental or financial. But how soon one realises the limitations to that sort of thing! You may help a person over a momentary difficulty with a few pounds, but you cannot support him—nor his wife and family. You can find a man a job, but you cannot make him keep it. You can talk all day with a person in mental or spiritual difficulties—and when you have finished realise to your sorrow that you have scarcely even got them to understand your point of view.

One's Own Religion

When I was younger I used to be very orthodox in matters of religion, and, I am afraid, rather dogmatic. It seemed to me to be so easy to believe the grand old doctrines of the Church. To-day I am, perhaps, not so orthodox; I am certainly more tolerant. For I have learned that religion is a very individual thing, and that it is worse than useless trying to force down someone else's throat the particular form of belief that has satisfied oneself.

In friendship, in our power of helping others, there are limitations.

Most of us are Ordinary People

I do not know if people will consider this a discouraging sort of talk. I don't mean it to be so. But, after all, the men and women of genius are comparatively few, and the ordinary people are here in their thousands. Ordinary men—and more especially ordinary women—have to learn sooner or later that there are a great many things they cannot do. It is no use to knock your head against a brick wall. Preachers often tell us about "the open door," and quote the text, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." I have knocked at a good many doors; nay, more than that, when they have not opened, I have given them a little more than a womanly push. But after a decent interval, if they have failed to open, I have concluded that that particular way was not for me; and by going a little farther along the street, strange to say I have usually found another door much easier of access, which has led to the same destination in the end. This may not be sound theology—I am not a theologian—but it seems to me to be sound common sense, and I know it has saved me many a useless heartache.

Life is a Series of Compromises

After all, life is a series of compromises, and it is far better for the most of us to do some smaller task well than to aim at some impossibly high goal.

I had an intimate talk the other day with a girl who complained that the young men of to-day were "a poor lot." She had had two or three offers of marriage, but not from the sort of men that she considered her ideal. Now I have always had the highest ideals about marriage; I think that a girl ought to have a sort of Prince Charming in her mind, and refuse to hold herself at the call of the first man who comes along.

But at the same time we live in a world of realities, and no men are perfect—nor, to be sure, are women. I patiently pointed out to my friend that, in matters matrimonial, as in everything else, a girl's "chances" (to use a horrid word) are limited. There are not many ideal men about, and even if one of them should alight her way, would they choose my

little friend? For, to be frank, she—like myself—was only another "ordinary" woman.

I did, however, point out to her what a lot a girl can make of quite an "ordinary" man. With tact she can rub away those awkward corners which loom so big in her eyes; with love she can inspire him to do the best that he is able—and sometimes even a little better than the best.

Making the Best of the Small Things

For—forgive my inconsistency—we really do not know what we can do until we try. Do not run away with the conclusion I am contradicting what up to this point I have been maintaining. But my experience goes to prove that if we will calmly take stock of ourselves, note the things we can't do and those we can, and set about in a reasonable way to develop whatever talent within us lies, it may be that by and by we shall find that our talent has grown; that what at one time we could not do, now we can aim at with reasonable chances of success.

I sometimes have chances of mixing with business men—chances of which I eagerly avail myself, because I think nothing tends more to furnish up the stay-at-home woman than to mix occasionally with men of business. At such times it has often been a source of comfort to me to observe that, very frequently, the men occupying high positions in the commercial world are not the extraordinary geniuses, but just "ordinary" good all-round men, who have attempted one small thing after another and have at last risen to high place. Probably they have no delusions about themselves; they know what they can do and what they can't do, and so refrain from putting their hands to ventures that are bound to be failures.

Now, please don't put me down as a "time-server," an "opportunist," or anything else of the sort; I am just an "ordinary" woman, and what I say is, know what you *can't* do, as well as what you can; do the best you are capable of; don't mourn over the things you cannot do, and there is a chance for you to be as happy and as useful as any woman under the sun.



The Home Department

THE VALUE OF RICE

By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR

AT this time of the year fresh vegetables are scarce and expensive, and the housewife must use as substitutes the different varieties of preserved and dried pulses and cereals which are at her command. During that never-to-be-forgotten period when potatoes were unobtainable, many of us discovered for the first time what valuable nourishment was contained in peas, beans, lentils, etc., and I do not think that the favourite potato substitute, rice, will ever be relegated to its former pre-war place of unimportance in the family menu.

Nourishing and Economical Diet

It is probably owing to its lack of individuality that rice is so helpful, for this enables the cook to use it very much in the same way that she does rhubarb, i.e. as a bulk-producer which, though not entirely flavourless, is capable of acquiring and augmenting, rather than diminishing, the flavour of whatever ingredient it is being mixed with as a quantity increaser. Thus rice is at one and the same time a real friend to the economical cook and also to the food consumer, for it allows the former to cut down by one half the quantity of meat or fish she would otherwise require, and provides the latter with a meal that is not only just as palatable, but also

just as nourishing and satisfying. The simplest kind of rice cookery is plain boiled, and in this form it may be used in almost countless ways. The ideal dish of rice presents a mound of hot, snow-white grains, each one quite separate from the rest, and all deliciously soft and melting in the mouth and utterly devoid of grit or dryness. Rice that is sent to table sticky, or, worst of all, sloppy, is rice spoilt, and such a dish will find favour neither in the dining-room nor kitchen.

Rice is divided, as everyone knows, into two varieties which are generally called Patna and Carolina. They are sometimes distinguished as polished and unpolished. The former grains are longer and thinner than the latter, and the outer surface, which is very glutinous, is partially removed during the milling process. This gluten is, of course, a very valuable food; but as it softens in the cooking process it forms a gelatinous cover for each grain and this causes the grains to adhere together. This is the reason why Patna or polished rice is always preferred when it is to be served as a vegetable or for any purpose when individual grains are required. Carolina rice is used for all kinds of puddings and sweet dishes, the gluten helping to add creaminess to the milk in which the rice is baked or boiled.

How to Cook Plain Boiled Rice

There are many methods which, if properly carried out, will produce the desired result of snowy separate grains, to be served as a vegetable, a bulk-producer, or a plain pudding.

The following is a good recipe :

Take a thick saucepan, preferably one made of iron lined with tin or enamel. Fill it three parts with boiling water, and add a dessertspoonful of salt. Stand over the fire and leave until the surface is a mass of surging bubbles. It is better not to wash the rice (in some cases this is necessary), but it should be carefully looked over and any imperfect grains removed. Take the required amount (3 oz. will weigh from 12 to 14 oz. when cooked), and sprinkle them with the hand into the fast-boiling water. The temperature of the water must not be allowed to decrease during the cooking of the rice. As long as the water bubbles, the rice will not sink to the bottom of the saucepan, and there can be no danger of its sticking and burning. If by any chance some of the grains do sink they should be raised with a fork, not a spoon as is commonly the case. Stirring the rice with a spoon crushes the grains, and this will inevitably spoil the appearance of the rice when sent to table.

To Test if Properly Cooked

When the rice has boiled for twenty minutes it should be tested to ascertain whether it is sufficiently cooked. The best test is to place one grain between the finger and thumb. If cooked, the rice will, on slight pressure, become a gluey pulp, but if the least grittiness can be detected the boiling process must be continued for a few minutes. When cooked pour carefully into a warmed colander, and when drained turn into a hot dish. If the above directions are followed the rice should need neither washing nor drying, but it occasionally happens that the grains do not fall apart as they should. This may be no fault of the cook, for, like everything else, rice varies, and sometimes the polished gets mixed with the unpolished by mistake. If the grains do not separate quickly and nicely, hold the colander under the hot-water tap and shake very gently so that the water can wash all the surfaces. Then stand the colander over a saucepan contain-

ing boiling water, so that it can drain and be kept hot at the same time. This steaming, by the way, is the best method of reheating rice left over from a previous meal. A plate can be placed over the top of the colander to retain the steam.

Rice prepared according to the foregoing recipe is now ready for the following purposes :

1. As a vegetable which is particularly nice with any dish that has a thickened gravy or is accompanied by sauce, such as rabbit with onion sauce, jugged hare, all kinds of hashes and stews, steamed or boiled fish, and, of course, curry.

2. An economiser, to reduce by half the amount of meat or fish required in rissoles, potato pie, fish cakes and pie, etc. More moistening than is usually added will be required in order that the rice may be thoroughly impregnated with the predominating flavour of the dish.

3. As a border. A very small left-over of boiled rabbit, chicken, or veal can be turned into a substantial meal if these directions are followed. Boil the rice in stock, preferably liquor in which the meat was simmered. In order not to waste the stock measure it into the pan, allowing rather more than twice the amount of liquor to rice. Thus into two breakfastcupfuls of boiling stock sprinkle three-quarters of a breakfastcupful of rice. Cook for twenty to twenty-five minutes, when the rice will have absorbed all the stock. As a dish of absolutely separate grains is not desired, it will not be necessary to boil the liquor so violently, which will economise the stock. It must be carefully watched whilst it is boiling, as the sticky nature of the contents of the pan causes them to burn quickly. If necessary, stir with a fork. Really the best way, if there is time, is to boil the stock and pour this into a heated double saucepan and let the rice cook for about an hour. Make a sauce, using one half milk and one half liquor; lay the pieces of meat or fowl in this till thoroughly hot, then lift on to a dish. Arrange the cooked rice as a border and pour the sauce over. The rice thus cooked has acquired the exact flavour of the meat, and is scarcely distinguishable from it.

4. The addition of plain boiled rice turns a thin soup into a substantial meal. It should be served under scrambled and

THE VALUE OF RICE

poached eggs instead of toast. It can also be used for a lining for a hot or cold mould of meat or fish, and many persons prefer rice to pearl barley in Irish stew.

Rice in Pudding Form

The usefulness of plain boiled rice does not end with the suggestions already enumerated, for it makes a very welcome change in the second course when served hot with jam, syrup, or custard made with custard powder.

Boiled Rice with Raisins

Wash 4 oz. of Carolina rice and mix with it 4 oz. raisins stoned and cut into pieces. Tie in a well-floured pudding cloth, leaving plenty of room for the rice to swell. Plunge the cloth into a saucepan full of cold water, and bring slowly to the boil. (If boiling water were used the outer layer of rice would be boiled to a pulp before the inner grains were cooked.) Cook for 1½ hours. Turn out on to a hot dish and serve with sweet sauce or hot custard. Chopped dates or sliced apples can be used as a substitute for raisins.

Rice with Beetroot and Apples (a Sugar-saving Recipe)

Put ½ lb. of rice into a thick saucepan and cover with milk or water. Boil gently until the rice has absorbed all the liquor. Meanwhile, cook six large apples cut in slices with six thick slices of beetroot and as little water as possible to prevent burning. When tender, mash to a pulp. Arrange the rice as a border, and put the fruit in the centre.

Creamed Rice

The nicest dish of rice plainly cooked in milk is that known as creamed rice, and this, when properly prepared, is excellent. Creamed rice is cooked in a double saucepan. Allow 3 oz. of the best Carolina rice to 1 pt. of milk. Boil the milk, adding whatever flavouring is preferred and a little sugar, and pour into the double saucepan. Sprinkle in the rice, cover the pan, and cook for about one hour with water boiling in the under saucepan. By this time the rice should have absorbed all the milk

and be in thick creamy-looking separate grains. It is ready to turn on to a hot dish and be served with jam, syrup, or custard. It is also delicious cold with stewed fruit. When the rice is to be eaten cold it should be removed from the under saucepan whilst there is still a little of the milk unabsorbed, and left to cool very gradually with the cover on, so that the hard crust, usually found on cold cooked rice, does not form. An occasional stir with a fork during the cooling process ensures a universal creaminess. If liked, the rice, whilst hot, can be turned into a china mould that has been rinsed with cold water, and when cold turned out in a solid shape.

A small left-over of this shape provides a hot sweet. Cut the moulded rice into neat fingers, brush with beaten egg, roll in crumbs, and fry. Put a little dab of jam in the centre of each, pile on a hot dish, and serve.

Some Useful Rice Dishes

Rice porridge is a change from oatmeal for breakfast. On the previous day boil ½ lb. of rice in rather more than 1 qt. of water salted to taste. Cook slowly for about three-quarters of an hour, then turn into a bowl. Next morning add 1 pt. (or if a thin porridge is preferred, 1½ pts.) of milk, and stir until the mixture boils. Serve in plates with whatever porridge seasoning is liked.

Savoury Rice Supper Dish

Take ½ lb. of plain boiled rice which has become cold. Boil a large Spanish onion for two hours, chop finely, and mix with it 2 oz. margarine, 2 teaspoonfuls chopped parsley, and season with salt and pepper. Beat two or three eggs (as can be spared) with the onion pulp, and stir into the rice. Turn into a well-greased baking dish, and cook for half an hour in a moderate oven. Send white or onion sauce to table with this dish.

One last hint: never throw away any water that remains in the pan after the rice is cooked; for this, diluted or not as required, is superior to the best starch, and will be found useful for all laundered articles which need stiffening before they are ironed.



ALL TO MATCH

Table Linen Embroidered in the Manner Described can give very Attractive Results

A REALLY good tea service (or any other china of worth, for that matter) deserves the best possible setting that you can give it in the way of table linen that is used with it. Too often one sees the daintiness of the china disturbed by an embroidered tablecloth which clashes with it both in design and colourings; and, though plain white linen is always in good taste, it is a far prettier idea to embroider special napery to harmonise.

This is not a difficult matter, for even a worker who "can't draw" in the ordinary way finds it easy to take the pattern on the china and adapt it for embroidering. The design need not be too closely adhered to—in many cases some of its details are unsuitable for needlework—so long as its general style is reproduced, and the colours matched exactly. The only safe way of ensuring the latter is to take a piece of china to the embroidery counter when choosing one's silks.

Transferring the Design

When the design is carefully drawn it must be transferred to the material by means of a piece of black carbon paper. Place the paper between the material and the pattern, with its black side downwards, and pin them all together or to the table



A Dutch Milk-mug, standing on a mat embroidered in design and colour to match the china.



The Embroidered Tricycloth gives this Devonshire Coffee Set quite a unique appearance.

so that no slipping is possible; then go over all the outlines with a knitting needle or other blunt-pointed instrument. While doing this, keep a pad of thick folded material under the hand which is tracing, or its pressure may cause the carbon to stain the material.

The Question of Material

Which remark brings me to the question of material. This largely depends on the china with which the finished work will be used. For all white china there is nothing so nice as fine white embroidery linen, or casement cloth if a cheaper material is desired; but if the china is tinted, its shade should be matched as nearly as possible for the groundwork of the embroidery. The little traycloth shown in the photograph was made of biscuit-coloured casement cloth, which toned exactly with the pale buff tint characterising Devonshire pottery. The lettering and simple design were worked in the same colours as appear on the coffee-pot.

This little round cloth fits into a circular tray made of cream-coloured wood, and the whole forms a very dainty little equipage.

The Tea Service—complete

A pretty tea service, of course, offers more scope than a coffee set, and the com-

DECORATIVE SMOCKING FOR HANDBAGS

plete equipment to go with it should consist of five o'clock tablecloth, four or six tea serviettes, the same number of doilies, and a tea cosy. If the design is first of all drawn for the tablecloth, it will be found that smaller motifs from it can be used for all the other articles in the set. The tea serviettes, which may be either bought ready hemmed or made entirely at home, only need a very little embroidery in one corner.

Some Points to Bear in Mind

It is important to remember when embroidering linen to go with china that heavy effects are much to be avoided, as handiwork which has any connection with meals should look as clean and fresh as possible. For this reason it is often necessary to represent what is a solid block of colour on the china, merely in outline on the linen, or only to fill it in with an open network of buttonholing. Among other things, this makes the work very quick to do, and one does not tire of it before the end.

I would emphasise that only in the case of *good* china should the pattern be perpetuated in this way, for any defects of

design are simply exaggerated by reproduction in needlework form. Because of its extreme simplicity, Devonshire ware lends itself charmingly to the work, and as it can always be got, cloths and doilies need never be discarded when any particular piece of pottery gets broken. A willow pattern tea service can be copied most charmingly in blue cross-stitch, and the red-and-white Chanticleer china is delightful to work from.

Foreign pottery, even though valueless, is often worth copying, for the commonest things that come from some countries, such as kitchen jugs and butter dishes, have a high artistic value. This is the case with the milk mug shown in the other photograph, which only cost a few pence in Amsterdam, but is "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." The little diamond-shaped cloth is very simply carried out in a single shade of blue, and the picture shows how nearly the design was able to be reproduced.

The loveliness of fine toilet china is much enhanced by mats and covers specially worked for it, and in fact this hobby can be turned to good account in many parts of the house.

DECORATIVE SMOCKING FOR HANDBAGS

HOWEVER much men may laugh at our pocketless condition, every woman remains convinced of the necessity of a handbag to take with her wherever she goes. They are no light expense in the feminine dress allowance, for good ones are very costly, and they get such rough wear and tear that their life is short. If you are weary of buying bag after bag



The Smocking in the centre sufficiently takes in the fullness of this very roomy Bag.

For variety and serviceability nothing can excel the Home-made Handbag—and its cost is next to nothing

at very short intervals, try the far better plan of investing in a good pair of clasps and fashioning your own receptacle to fit them.

Clasps are sold in the fancy work departments of most shops. They can be bought for as little as half-a-crown, but it is more economical in the long run to

pay more and get an article that will last for many years. A good-sized aluminium

THE QUIVER

clasp in excellent taste runs into about five shillings. Each clasp has rows of holes into which the bag is sewn.

The Material at No Cost

The piece box will usually supply material for making up the bag, and there is no more novel and effective trimming than the smocking which is so extremely popular at present for all kinds of dress articles. For a smocked bag the fabric must be thin enough to pleat softly, but strong enough to stand wear and tear. Shantung silk, either natural or dyed, corded silk, fine linen, wool-backed satin, and many of the silk and wool mixtures all answer the purpose well.

Smocking takes up a good deal of stuff, and the bag will require to be from 15 to 20 inches wide, according to the size of the clasps. Cut two pieces of stuff the required width, and whatever depth you may prefer, and stamp off a smocking transfer on the wrong side of each piece.

Various Methods of Working

The smocking may either be arranged to fill in the whole space between the clasps (as in the case of the light bag photographed here), or, if the clasps are large, it is sometimes more effective to arrange the smocking in two side panels with a plain centre between, or as a centre with plain sides. The latter arrangement decorates the black bag in the other photograph.

Any smocking or honeycombing stitches may be used, in any pattern that pleases the individual worker; if the bag is made to match a smocked frock, the same stitches and general arrangement should be adhered to.

Making the Bag

After smocking and drawing out the tacking, seam the bottom edges of the bag together and seam up the sides as far as the base of the clasps. Cut a lining the same size in thin Jap or flowered silk, and seam

it in a similar manner. Then slip the lining into the bag, with all raw edges turned inwards, and overcast the top portions of both bag and lining very neatly together. Finally sew the bag strongly into the clasps with double cotton and, if desired, hang tassels from the bottom corners.

The handle must be neat and strong. Take a narrow ribbon twice the length the

handle is to be, cut it in half, and sew the two pieces together along both edges, with a narrow tape between to give extra strength. Attach each end very firmly to the rings on the clasp. Another plan is to use a strip of the bag material, 4 inches wide, instead of the ribbon, wrapping it round and round the tape, and sewing the edges neatly down. Fifteen inches is a good average length for the handle.

To Match Frocks and Costumes

Half the fascination of making one's own handbags is that one can choose materials and colourings to match particular frocks and costumes. For general hard wear there is nothing like black, navy or nigger, and it is a good plan to have two clasps, one of which has always a bag in one of these colours attached to it. The second clasp can be used for bettermost wear, and have its bag changed as often as a new frock is bought.

The smocking may be done either in flax thread (on a linen bag) or in embroidery silk. A still newer plan is to use a reel of the gold, silver, or aluminium thread which is sold so largely for stitching coat-frocks. The other photograph shows a tasteful handbag of black corded material, honeycombed in a square panel with silver thread, and set into a curved aluminium clasp.

It is often a convenience to make little pockets in the lining, before it is sewn to the bag, in which small keys and other easily lost articles may be kept. This saves the familiar frantic dive to the bottom of a loaded bag.



The Long-shaped Bag with the popular "tassel" finish.



My Good Angel

P. J. Heeney

By HILDA M. MARIAN

THE very house! Oh, I shall love this dear old place."

I spoke aloud in my delight as I stood in the wide, empty hall and looked around me.

After several weeks of tedious house-hunting I had unearthed a treasure in the heart of Surrey. The first view of the old house in its picturesque grounds aroused great expectations, but the interior fairly moved me to ecstasy. I loved the rooms, with their old oak and marble fittings, their wide hearths and lofty, mulioned windows, and as I touched the stair rail and door handles I imagined that I felt a strange sensation of content and peace.

It was a warm autumn day, and after wandering about the house I passed through a side door into the wilderness-like garden and down to a little gate at the end that opened into a quiet lane.

People have called me "mediumistic,"

but whatever the cause, my strange, happy feelings prompted me to reflect:

"One could imagine that a good spirit presides over Melbrook; it has such an atmosphere of beautiful calm. It is nice to think there may be one who will feel glad when we are gay and whose influence will cheer us when we are sad."

When I told my husband I had taken an old house he was a wet blanket to my joy, and foreboded beetles and bad drains; he said the name itself reflected mouldiness. I opened my mind and told him the house drew me irresistibly, that I loved it and felt we were made for each other, which confessions he received with a pitying silence that in a stranger would have been contempt; but having thus recorded his protest, he loyally fell in with my ideas.

In company with our little boy and a new maid, we moved in, and the first day or two passed in the rush of "getting straight."

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Some measure of order had been achieved, and I was resting by the drawing-room fire in the gloaming, when there was a hurried knocking at the door, and in rushed the maid. I could see by the firelight she was trembling, that her face was deathly pale, and her widely opened eyes fixed and ghastly. I sprang up in alarm.

"What is it, Jane? What is it?"

"A—a woman," she whispered, "a—a ghost!"

I drew back with a gasp.

"A ghost? Where?"

"She—she was at the end of the passage. Oh, dear! Oh, dear! I only saw her face sideways—a woman in a grey cloak. Oh, I shall never, never dare go upstairs again."

"Sit down, Jane," I said decisively, "and tell me exactly what you saw. Did she speak to you or touch you, or anything?"

The girl gave a half-suppressed scream at the very idea.

"Oh, no, no; she didn't see me. I was coming out of Donnie's bedroom, and—and I saw her."

A ghost! I shivered involuntarily, and, snatching up the matches, lit the gas.

"Is—is Donnie asleep?" I asked. "I—I must go up to him. I—I wish Mr. Fletcher were here. Come upstairs with me, Jane."

I lighted a candle and, feeling far from the dauntless person I tried to appear, hurried upstairs. Assured that Donnie was safely asleep in his cot, I peered into all the dark corners.

I admit I was frightened for myself, but more so for my baby. Jane, following like a shadow, stood with me outside Donnie's door.

"Where was she?" I whispered hoarsely.

Jane pointed into the darkness, and I was going forward to make a brave investigation, but she held me back, and before I could remonstrate with her my husband entered the hall below.

We stood on the stairs and told him in whispers what Jane had seen. The idea of a ghost touched his sense of humour. He laughed openly at the maid, telling her not to read novelettes, and chipped me for being silly and superstitious; but nevertheless, suspecting burglars, he made a cautious search throughout the house.

Later that evening Don came to me, looking profoundly wise and amused.

"I've nailed Jane's ghost," he said, "and after to-morrow morning we shan't hear of it again. Can you believe it, Gwen? The ghost is Jane."

"The ghost Jane!" I gasped.

"Exactly," he said. "I was up on the attic stairs and, happening to look down, I saw a woman wearing a grey cloak on the landing below. That girl's got a game on; she's a dangerous character, and we'll send her packing in the morning. A ghost indeed! It's her own self, masquerading. I came downstairs as soon as I could, but found she'd gone to bed, or else I'd have taxed her with it straight away; but we'll lock everything up to-night. I'll tell her who the ghost is in the morning; it's lucky we've found her out."

We were both disturbed by this discovery, and lay awake throughout the night, listening for any noise. But we fell asleep eventually, and it was quite late when we awoke. We hastened downstairs; the house was silent and the breakfast unprepared. Jane was nowhere to be seen, and a letter on the kitchen table explained why. She had gone.

"I'm afraid to stay in a haunted house," the letter read, "so I'm going away this morning, although I'm sorry to leave you, ma'am."

Don said, "Don't believe it!" and immediately searched the house for what might be missing, but everything was safe.

"We must keep our wits about us," he said. "That girl's up to something."

The idea that Jane was an experienced rogue in cap and apron was sufficiently disconcerting, but her departure left me in a fix. We had had money losses—which accounted for our wanting a house both large and cheap—and I was engaged on a book that was to replenish our coffers.

The precious manuscript was complete but for revising; and, despairing for time and in urgent need of money, I dispatched it that morning in its rough state, thinking I would complete the alterations on the proof.

The day had begun inauspiciously, and it was to proceed in a manner never to be forgotten. Baby became seriously ill, and in the evening, when Don returned, I knew by the look on his face that something was wrong. It proved, as I suspected, to be the business which he was laboriously working up.

MY GOOD ANGEL

"I wish someone would lend us a little money until the tide turns," he lamented. "If help doesn't come soon we shall have to close down, and then—nothing."

Don was very downcast, for the outlook was cheerless; but I took comfort, having great hopes my book would stand us in need.

After that there were some very dark days. Baby developed measles, and was very ill; while I knew what it was to have an empty purse and go short of necessities. Don was worried almost to death; he fought hard to keep things going, but his daily cry was for money, and I harassed the editor with earnest inquiries about my manuscript. My hourly question was, would the money come in time? And then came the day when the brown paper parcel was returned to me. To all appearance, my story had not even been looked at. I sank into a chair by the cot where baby lay sleeping, and cried and cried.

I heard Don come in, heard him come upstairs and into the room, but I was too broken down to greet him.

"What's the matter, Gwen?" he asked, speaking in a whisper for fear of waking Donnie; but seeing the rejected story in my lap, he tried to comfort me.

"I do wish it had sold," I moaned. "We haven't a sovereign in the world."

"Gwen," Don said seriously, "we've had nothing but bad luck since we've been here, and I feel very uncomfortable about it. You don't know that on several nights lately the house has been broken into?"

I looked quickly at Don through my tears.

"The house broken into?" I repeated in amazement.

"Sometime during the night I woke up," he said, "and I distinctly heard footsteps. I thought at once that Jane had come to raid the premises, but I could find no trace of anyone, and everything was safe and undisturbed. I don't want to blame you, Gwen, but I wish we'd never come here."

"Oh, dear," I sighed, "I had such hopes we were going to be happy at Melbrook. I loved the place at first sight."

"That's just it," Don said. "You took the house in a rush without asking my advice. I should say that we clear out as soon as Donnie can be moved."

I went on crying quietly—it was all so disappointing.

"Don't cry any more, Gwen; we'll end

the bad business by getting away. There, we won't talk, or else we shall wake the kiddie. You look fagged out. Try to get a nap—it will refresh you," and wrapping a blanket round me he went out of the room.

For a time I thought about our misfortunes and the mystery which seemed to afflict our house. I recalled my first impressions of the place—how I had imagined it had a peculiar atmosphere about it—a beneficent, happy one. I had felt irresistibly drawn towards Melbrook. Could it be—and the idea horrified me—that the attraction was an evil one?

I did not share Don's robust disbelief in ghosts, and the idea that Melbrook was haunted added to my interest in it, but the thought of a ghost with an evil power filled me with terror. In my excited state of mind I saw a diabolical being who had lured me into taking Melbrook only to work our ruin. I became wildly alarmed at these thoughts, and felt like snatching up my sleeping baby in a blanket and flying from the place; but remembrance of my first impressions withheld me. I could not believe they had emanated from anything wicked: they belonged to truth and love and gentleness.

Soothing thoughts came to me. Donnie lay sleeping peacefully, and, leaning back in my chair, I closed my eyes.

I slept—it must have been an hour or more—when there broke upon my consciousness a moaning sound. I started into a sitting posture, and stared wildly about me. I leaned towards Donnie, but he still slept. The fire having burned low, the room was quite dark and the house was silent.

Who could have uttered that sound of pain? But I knew it was the ghost. I sat, petrified with terror, listening intently, yet inwardly praying I might not hear that sound again.

Oh! where was Don? It seemed that I had waited for hours when I heard his key in the front door.

"Gwen," he shouted, and I sped down to him.

He was lighting the gas, and seemed unusually cheerful.

"I happened to find some loose silver in my collar drawer," he said, gathering up several parcels from the floor, "so went out to buy a few provisions. Cheer up, wife; we'll have a jolly supper."

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"Silver in your collar drawer, Don?" I said. "How lucky! And yesterday, you know, I found some in the pocket of an old dress—we must have been careless with money when we had plenty."

We had been feeding so sparingly that perhaps I ate too happily and well at supper; anyway, I woke up in the night with terrible indigestion. I crept out of bed to go downstairs for a curative, and went to a wardrobe on the landing to get my dressing-gown.

I drew the door open, and then stood, suddenly transfixed with terror. Simultaneously the back of the wardrobe had fallen away, and in the aperture stood the ghostly form of a woman.

I opened my mouth to call for help; for an instant no sound came, then there was a gurgling in my throat, and at last a shrill scream broke from me.

I had a vague impression that the ghost was as disconcerted at our sudden meeting as I was. She was elderly—a slight figure enveloped in a grey cloak.

My scream had awakened Don; he stood in the ray of moonlight, his eyes wild and his face deathly pale.

Then I realised that it was a being of flesh and blood who stood before me; that it was not illusory but actual, that she had entered the wardrobe from a room beyond. I overcame my fear, demanding who she was and what she was doing there.

She seemed about to speak, when her face grew ashen and she fell forward in a faint.

Don and I lifted her up and laid her on a mattress in the tiny room beyond the wardrobe, the discovery of which thoroughly amazed us.

Three days later the "ghost" and I were sitting beside the fire in the best bedroom, with the tea-table between us. She was a sweet, gentle lady, with some eccentricities, but I loved her already as I had only loved my mother before; and not until then, as my patient, did I permit Miss Benbow to explain her presence at Melbrook.

"I have been here almost all the summer," she said. "I did not know Melbrook had been let, and I returned one evening at dusk, after several days' absence, to find it occupied. I entered through the side door as usual, and was in the hall before I realised the house was furnished. I was seized with fright; I ought to have gone

into the garden again, but some instinct made me rush upstairs to the safety of the secret room."

"I must admit I am curious about that room, Miss Benbow," I said.

"I lived here for many years," said the little lady, "at first my sister and I together. She had peculiar ways. She was a person no one understood, and she arranged that room for her use and meditation. I left Melbrook about five years ago to live with a distant cousin, but the arrangement was not a satisfactory one, and I ran away and kept myself hidden from her. I came back to this neighbourhood to take a farewell look at my old home, and it seemed so lonely in its empty state that the idea came to me to hide here for a while. I happened to possess a key to the side door, so I ventured inside and made myself comfortable in my late sister's room, of which I alone knew."

"And what happened that night when you found us in possession?"

"Oh! I was terrified. No sooner was I in my sanctuary than the desire seized me to rush away. I was in a panic until safe beyond the grounds. But I had left money, papers, and other things I valued here, and after a few weeks I dared to come, intending to explain myself. I knocked at the back door for fully half an hour. The house was silent, apparently empty. I thought how my room was at the top of the scullery staircase, and an impulse seized me to get my belongings and hasten away.

"In running upstairs I sprained my ankle; this prevented my escape, and I have frequently suffered great pain from it. I often heard you and your husband talking on the landing, and I wished to help you. I crept about at night and put bits of money in out-of-the-way places, hoping you would find it. After your kindness to me I hope you will let me assist you all I can."

Very shortly after the mystery of the house had been thus happily solved our troubles cleared away like the morning mist. With a little financial aid from Miss Benbow the position of the business was secured. In course of time Donnie recovered his health. Jane returned to our service, and I settled down to give my book the practical revision it required.

And when Don laughs at my mediumistic reputation I remind him how I knew we had a good angel at Melbrook.



"Let our one never-ceasing care be to better the love that we offer our fellows.

"One cup of this love that is drawn from the spring on the mountains is worth a hundred taken from the stagnant well of ordinary charity."

MAETERLINCK.

DEAR ARMY OF HELPERS,—
On looking back upon the work that you have achieved since I first suggested my scheme in October, I think that without any desire to go in for a course of snug patting-you-on-the-back-all-round, I was yet justified in feeling very pleased at the spontaneous and splendid response to my appeal. For I am not counting the work done by the amount of hard cash realised. Superior people might say, "Oh, but you haven't collected much money, after all. Some funds raise thousands of pounds." True, oh Superior One, but then you see many of the folk who compose my Army can give only a few *shillings* in money, but a great deal in service and sacrifice. And the result is that quantities of silver and gold trinkets, gay bags, gloves, and fur, have poured into the office, showing that personal trouble and the parting from a cherished ornament have played a great part in the response to my suggestion. In fact, the gifts to the Silver Thimble Fund have far exceeded my expectations, and I am filled with ambition to raise by this means £400 required for a "QUIVER ARMY OF HELPERS" MOTOR AMBULANCE.

You will see that Miss Hope Clarke suggests this in the letter from her printed below. I do not think that it is a dream beyond our attainment. It would be the greatest satisfaction to feel that through our efforts we had provided the means of bringing comfort to our wounded. In fact, we would feel that every oddment of silver sent to the office helped to save the valuable life of one of our gallant men. Miss Hope Clarke writes:—

"Ambulances are terribly needed as a result of this new Push. Shattered and battered ones must be replaced."

So, QUIVER Army of Helpers, I call upon you to do your very best to raise this sum by

means of those silver and gold treasures lying idle and useless in many a jewel-box or drawer. Remember, every scrap is a help—nothing is too old or battered. Some folk send one little silver brooch or pin; others send a large boxful. One contributor from Worcester sent a marvellous collection comprising 23 brooches, 8 gold rings, 14 bracelets, 5 lockets, 2 Indian bracelets, necklace and brooch, 1 gold watch, etc. Naturally, such a gift is a tremendous help, but every gift is welcome—all go to swell the total—and no one need be ashamed of sending something because it is too small. You can see from the interesting photograph of ingots the amazing result of all these "mickles"—they make a most imposing "muckle."

And now you are impatient to know the result of our collection up to date.

The Collections Total £73 14s. 10d.

Miss Hope Clarke's two letters will give you the result and the analysis of the two collections of silver and gold oddments. In her first letter she says:—

"November 1st, 1917

"DEAR MRS. LOCK,—

"How can we thank your readers for the wonderful surprise parcel of oddments collected in such a short time by your QUIVER Army of Helpers. We will tell you the value at once, because you must be longing to know:—

	£	s.	d.
110 oz. of silver at 3s. 2d.			
an ounce	17	8	4
3 oz. of gold at 38s. an ounce	5	14	0
Saleable items	6	10	5
Coins	14	0	0
Cash	4	6	8
	<u>£</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>17</u> <u>3</u>

"There were no less than 110 thimbles. This is a splendid contribution, and we would like to thank and to congratulate you and all your

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kind QUIVER Army of Helpers who have so readily sent you their trinkets and treasures.

"Yours truly,
Wimbledon. " H. E. HOPE CLARKE."

And in her second letter Miss Hope Clarke makes the suggestion, which fills me with enthusiasm:—

"November 20th, 1917.

"DEAR MRS. LOCK,—

"We are most grateful to you and to all the members of your QUIVER Army of Helpers for the second collection of 'oddments' which so soon followed your last parcel. You will like to know, and we are delighted to tell you, that this is even better and amounts to £42 17s. 7d. It is made up as follows:—

	5½ oz. of gold at 42s. per	£ s. d.
ounce	11 11 0	
140½ oz. of silver at 3s. per		
ounce	22 0 3	
Saleable items	8 11 4	
Cash	15 0	
		£42 17 7

"It is very curious that the number of thimbles is 110, exactly the same as last time.

"We heartily congratulate you on this ready and generous response to your appeal, and can only hope that you and your Army of Helpers are as gratified and pleased as we are. The Motor Dental Surgery will now be put in hand, and our next object is to send out more ambulances to the Front. We have urgent requests for these from *all the Fronts*. Do you think your 'New Army' would like to make a great effort to raise £400 and send out an ambulance of its own, to be called 'THE QUIVER'? We are encouraged to suggest this by the wonderful start they have made.

"Yours very gratefully,
"H. E. HOPE CLARKE."

I hope that we shall ere long realise Miss Hope Clarke's suggestion. If every reader of THE QUIVER were to send his or her oddments of silver, we should have the £400 by next month. There are so many things that can be spared, and so many that could be spared with the aid of a little self-sacrifice. I have many examples of gifts that were very dear—priceless, in fact, to the owners. Here is a record of some oddments that were

A Sacrifice in Silver or Gold

"I am sending you a few articles, all belonging to dear ones, long ago gone home. Trusting they will be of some use to the brave men." (Barnard Castle.)

"The enclosed, I hope, may bring a little pleasure to our brave men. I am only a servant, so that my store is not very large." (A Well-wisher.)

"Just a few little things for our soldiers. I do hope they are all silver—they are supposed to be. The little brooches I value greatly, as they were given me when a child twenty or more years ago by a dear brother now in Heaven." (Old Charlton.)

"Please accept enclosed. I have put in a couple of stamps. Will you please acknowledge—not that they are so valuable in worth—it is the associations. The need must be met, and it is all I can do at the present. I am telling all I know about THE QUIVER effort. It is heart-rending to see our boys suffer so." (East Dulwich.)

"I have been a reader of THE QUIVER for forty years, and seeing you ask for silver thimbles, I venture to send you a few small articles. They are perhaps not of much value, but every little helps, and I am not in a position to do more at present."

"I am sending a few things I looked up, and hope to hear that they reach you safely: one locket, one brooch, one pencil-case, one small chain with three coins, one rupee which I had brought me from India some years ago, and a silver-mounted belt which belonged to a sister now dead." (Knightsbridge.)

"I was young and took in THE QUIVER, and now am old and still take it. I cannot do much, but will try to crack a nut or two, and will be a helper as far as I am able, for I suffer very much from rheumatics. Am sending a few little things. I sent last year's QUIVERS to the Navy." (Whaplode.)

Glove Waistcoat Society

It was really an amazing sight to see the quantity of gloves and fur collected in my room at La Belle Sauvage. There were whole fur coats and tiny snippets of fur—brown, black, grey, and white fur—gloves of every description. I felt very pleased, and at the same time I couldn't help smiling at the words of one letter I received:

"I can't help feeling sympathetically towards the kind lady who has to open all the horrid parcels of old gloves—there's something so disreputable about an old kid glove."

Disreputable they may look; there certainly is a very depressed air about them. The kind lady at the office who deals with them acknowledges this too; but she and her young assistants forget that when they think of the transformation they undergo and the comfort they bring to our men on the seas. The fur, too, is of the very greatest value—large and small pieces are alike welcome.

Here is the sum total of gloves and fur—we have sent two large consignments:—

671 pairs of gloves.

Two huge parcels of fur.

And here is Miss Cox's letter showing you how welcome are your gifts:—

Gloves are Urgently Needed

"DEAR MADAM,—

"We are *extremely* grateful to you for your most useful contributions of gloves and fur. I cannot tell you how much we appreciate such help as you have given us in making our needs known through the medium of THE QUIVER. I only wish we could send to all friends and helpers the letters of appreciation we receive from the men who wear the coats, so that they could be as sure as we are what a real service they are to the men who are fighting for us.

"Over 30,000 of these windproof waistcoats are in use at the present time. Last August 500 were sent to men in Mesopotamia for the coming winter

"THE QUIVER" ARMY OF HELPERS

season, and quantities have been sent throughout the year to mine-sweepers.

"This year we worked on all through the summer with the object both of benefiting the most needy of the workers and obviating as far as we could the waiting which had to take place last year for waistcoats needed directly the cold weather came.

"Our stock of gloves at the present time is very low, and fills us with anxiety.

"With grateful thanks to all.

"Yours faithfully,
" MARY L. COX."

Gay Bags in Hundreds

A very cheerful sight were the Gay Bags that we sent to Mrs. Ord Marshall in two parcels, 278 in the first one, 127 in the second—that is :

405 Gay Bags.

And they are still coming in. We cannot have too many of them. And I must add a word of praise for all readers who have turned out such neat and pretty bags. Please remember that it is better that they should be a little larger than the dimensions I gave than a little smaller. And please remember, too, that the gayer and prettier they are the better the men like them. They should be made of cretonne or sateen—flowered, if possible: roses are first favourites with our "boys" in hospital.

A Labour of Love

One can see from many letters received with the bags that the making of them has been a labour of love, and I want to quote from a few of them :—

"Having seen your request in THE QUIVER for Gay Bags and old kid gloves, for use and to make into use for our brave boys that are doing so much for us, please accept a few bags and gloves sent, trusting you may find them useful, and hoping this terrible war may soon come to an end and our boys return home. Some of us mothers are so longing to see our boys again." (Downham Market.)

"Please to accept these four bags—you must excuse imperfection, as I am turned 83 years of age and my sight is getting bad." (Sydenham.)

"The bags were sewn by my aunt, who is 75 and an invalid, but she is very keen to do what she can for the soldiers."

"I enclose a Gay Bag as a sample to see if it is made correctly. In reading THE QUIVER, I felt here was something my children could do in the holidays. Joan, 5 years old, turns the machine and thinks they are lovely Gay Bags, as she likes everything with roses on." (Harrowgate.)

A Corner for Cases of all Kinds

It has occurred to me that the Army of Helpers might achieve excellent and much-needed work in cases not directly connected with the war. No sacrifice and no effort is too great to be made for our fighting men; but this is an "extra," born of the war-time in which we live. We must not forget or neglect the poor and sick and friendless who are suffering still more severely owing to the war and the rise in prices. The meagre pittances on which many poor gentle-women had to live before the war practically

go only half as far as they once did. I am setting aside a corner for those in poor circumstances who desire a visitor or someone to whom they can speak of their difficulties. I shall be glad of names and addresses of those who seek sympathy, and of those who are ready to give it. I have a few cases on my list already :—

1. A lady crippled by illness, living in Hertford.
2. Two ladies, both over 70, struggling with a small school in Torquay.
3. Two ladies—one a suffering invalid, the other principal of a school, who looks after two invalids. Both live at East Sheen.
4. A very superior maid, nearly 70 and penniless, able to do occasional cooking and caretaking, very delicate, seeks employment or assistance; lives at Battersea.
5. A most superior woman, aged 50, unfortunately suffering from failing eyesight, seeks a very light post as cook-companion to an elderly lady. She is an excellent cook and can still manage her work if she has plenty of time and a considerate employer. She has an excellent appearance and a very sympathetic personality. Her husband died two years ago after a long illness which swallowed up their savings. She had a very nice home then. An exceptionally sad case, in which assistance and sympathy would be a really kind act. She lives at Staines.

All offers of help and details of cases should be addressed to me at THE QUIVER offices.

A Plea for Books

I have been asked for books for two different objects :—

Land Workers' Library

Miss Monica M. Sharp, Secretary of the Land Workers' Libraries, has asked me to collect some books for her. Women who are working on the land are frequently in isolated villages, where they have little opportunity of getting any books to read after their monotonous day's work. Novels, biographies, poems, and books of travel are all welcome. The books need not be new, but they must be clean.

Club for Deaf Working Girls

My friend Miss Julia Montagu, Hon. Secretary of a Club for Deaf Working Girls in Marylebone, will be glad of books for them. School stories, books by L. T. Meade, Ethel Talbot, Angela Brazil, Mrs. De Horne Vaizey, etc., will be most acceptable. The girls are so bright it spite of their handicap in life, and all of them are employed in dressmaking or other occupations during the day. They thoroughly enjoy their recreation at the Club in the evening.

Books should be addressed to me at the office where they will be sorted out and distributed.

Silver Paper Wanted

Here is a very simple "nut" to crack for those who have a cigarette smoker or a choco-

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late consumer in their family. The silver paper from cigarette and chocolate boxes is most useful, and must on no account be thrown away. Please send it to me in any quantity, and I will forward it to the Quartermaster of a Convalescent Home for Soldiers. She sells it and realises a nice sum for comforts for the "boys" under her care.

St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors

We have received the welcome sum of £38 12s. 4d. for the Hostel. The result of the appeal for

The Blinded Soldiers' Children

is not yet complete. The sum of £13 provides for one child for one year.

A Splendid List of Kind Donors

I am most grateful to the following for gifts to the Silver Thimble Fund, Gay Bags, old gloves and fur for the Glove Waistcoat Society, kind letters, etc.:

Mrs. S. Alexander, Miss Edith Carpenter, Mrs. Meredith, A. M. Boyd, Miss Keeling, Miss May Wilson, Mrs. and Miss Smart, Miss L. George, F. Cosway, Miss Anderson, A. M. (Stonehaven), Mrs. Condell, Miss Ferguson, Mrs. Fanny Bates, Mrs. A. Backhouse, L. P. Propert, the Misses Nicholson, Florence Walmington and friends, Miss Florence Nicholson, Miss Beith, Anonymous (St. Leonards-on-Sea), Miss F. Gladstone, Miss S. Bacon, Mrs. A. J. Herring, Mrs. Lawrence Bell, M. Owen, Miss A. Burrows, Miss E. B. Friston, Emily Pretsell, Miss Rogerson, Mrs. E. Smale, Mrs. A. E. Playne, Anonymous (Edinburgh), Miss Inch, Mrs. Anderson, Nurse Guthrie, Clydesdale Bank House, C. M., Miss M. Fletcher, Anonymous (Penzance), A. B. (Chorley), Two Readers (Budleigh Salterton), Mrs. U'Ren, A Reader of *THE QUIVER* (Dawlish), Anonymous (Glazebrook), E. T. (Woking), Miss Morton, Mrs. J. M. Deas and the Misses Rankin, the Misses Woodford, Miss Violet M. Fox, Mrs. Hyde, Mrs. A. Boyden, Martha Sandford, Miss A. W. Bandrop, "From a Reader of *THE QUIVER*, for the Soldiers," Mrs. Kettle, "A Constant Reader of *THE QUIVER*," "A Well-wisher," Miss H. M. Emmett, E. K. H., Miss Helen A. Ewing, "A Sailor's Sister," "Walden, Slough," Mrs. J. Morton, Miss M. E. Conway, Mrs. C. Couchman, Miss H. M. Harpham, Mrs. King, Annie K. Hillis, May Laurie, Miss Iles, Mrs. Mellor, Miss Anderson, Mrs. T. H. Cregoe, the Misses Wright and Toward, M. Russell, Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Noot, Miss McHaffie, K. D. Lane, M. and F. Coombe, Mrs. Sam Howcroft, Mrs. Bessie Smith, Mrs. J. P. Philip, Anonymous (Bootle), A. B., the Misses Blease, Miss F. W. Sargent, Mrs. Haylett, Mrs. Ralph G. Jones, F. Coombs, Miss Goodgaines and friend, Miss A. C. Gunn, Miss Higgins, Miss E. Hewitt, Miss E. Taylor, F. M. S., Miss Fanny Bates, Miss Winifred Ridley, J. Greenfield, Esq., Miss Maggie Muir, A. M. A. A. (Edinburgh), Miss Betty Balfour (Jamaica), Charles F. G. Jackson (China), Miss E. B. Friston, Miss Rogerson, Miss Muriel M'Walter, Mrs. Attenborough, Mrs. Coud, Mrs. Churchman, Lily E. Ostle, Miss J. B. Morgan, Annie J. Lane, Mrs. T. J. Catchpole, E. de Garis, Miss E. Butler, the Misses Ferguson, Mrs. Florence E. Lock, Miss Metcalf, "A Hawick Reader," Mrs. Smethurst, Miss A. B. Warburg, Mrs. Sidney Lock, Mrs. A. Fox, Miss Isa Allenby, Miss Caroline Horsfall, Miss Tuckerman (Boston, U.S.A.), Mrs. Drummond, Miss E. L. Shipton, Miss Walburn, the Misses Cuthbertson, Miss E. B. Rawlinson, "A

Reader of *THE QUIVER*" (nugget of silver, etc.), Edith Searle, Sarah L. Sparkes, Ada Simmins, G. E. N., Amelia J. Herridge, Mrs. Cable, Mrs. McArthur, Mrs. Strachan and daughters, Miss Edmonston, Miss C. L. France, Miss A. L. Chalmers, Miss Newman, Anonymous (Torquay), Miss Gay, K. A. Cooper, Miss Wiltshire, Miss Sheringham, E. Gosnay, Miss M. Reddrop, E. P. (Greenwich), Miss Elsley, Mrs. Taylor (Pollokshields), Miss Gibson, Miss A. M. Keightley, Miss Stella J. Crimp, "Chingford, E. 4," C. Maynard, M. Hog, Mrs. Parker, Miss Margaret Hart, Miss A. H. Jeffrey, Mrs. A. Clark, "An Old Subscriber to *THE QUIVER*," Miss Rawes, Mrs. Fauckner, "With best wishes from a Reader of *THE QUIVER*," "From One who loves Sailors" (Liverpool), H. A. Ewart, the Misses Hubbard, B. A. Clegg, "A Reader of *THE QUIVER*" (Chobham), Miss J. E. Poultier, R. A. Cunningham, Rose Porter, Ellen Playford, Mrs. A. Todd, Mrs. Tubby, Miss Agnes P. Robertson, Miss J. Cordell, Mrs. Matthewman, J. R. L., Mary Rose, Miss E. M. Graves, the Misses Mackintosh, Miss Gertrude Steel, the Misses McWilliam, Mrs. Heford, Miss Henderson, the Misses Morton, Mrs. G. H. Hiles, Mrs. Sara Trarriow, Miss Arnold, Mrs. Mary White, Mrs. Richmond, Mrs. Belton, Miss Chown, Mrs. Bankes, Miss R. Richardson, Pupils of the Academy, Bathgate (per W. M. Henderson), Miss Bishop, Anonymous (10s.), Miss E. Macmillan, L. A. Nutt, Beatrice Cox, Mrs. Berry, L. M. Bradley, Mrs. Sweetman, "A Reader of *THE QUIVER*," Miss Dunlop, S. Bacon, Miss Holland, M. D. A. P. (Whitstable), Ethel Barker, Mrs. Alexander Paris, Miss Helen Tancock, "A Reader of *THE QUIVER*," Miss Crosfield, Miss Clark, Miss H. Welsh, A. Brindley, R. M. Barker, Mrs. Thomas Boyden, Miss C. H. Forster, Miss Truscott, Mrs. Hayworth, Miss Rankin, Mrs. Harwood, Mrs. A. S. Chamberlain, M. Gee, Anonymous (Cleckheaton), Miss Mary Toleman, M. and J. P. (Dunfermline), M. Southgate, Miss M. F. Cowan, J. J. Ball and Miss Ball, Miss Mary Cowan and sister, Mrs. Sugg, Miss Aitken, Miss Jenkins, Anonymous (Petersfield), Mrs. Waddell, Miss White, T. B. Gilbert, etc.

Many letters, etc., are held over till next month, owing to want of space.

I think this is a splendid list, and I wish I could express to each helper individually my grateful thanks by letter instead of the formal postcard. However, the response has been so great that time does not permit of any other form of acknowledgment. I hope every kind donor will understand that every gift, big or small, and every "job" undertaken through my suggestion, is equally appreciated.

May I ask correspondents kindly to sign their names very distinctly, and to put Mr., Mrs., or Miss or any other title in order to assist us in sending an accurate acknowledgment.

My hearty thanks to one and all—and I hope to be able to chronicle an equally successful result in next month's *QUIVER*.

Yours sincerely,

BELLA SIDNEY WOOLF
(Mrs. R. H. Lock).

All letters, silver and gold oddments for the Silver Thimble Fund, kid gloves and fur for the Glove Waistcoat Society, books, silver paper gifts of money for the Blinded Soldiers Children's Fund and for the support of "Philip" at the Home for Little Boys, Farnham should be sent to Mrs. R. H. Lock, *THE QUIVER* Offices, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.4 Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to Cassell and Co., Limited.

Long Complete Story

IN SEARCH OF ROMANCE

BY

RUBY M. AYRES

CHAPTER I

Freedom

THE moving steps in the room overhead stopped suddenly, and the girl crouching by the fire in the large drawing-room below shivered, drawing her slim shoulders together with faint apprehension.

Outside the house an October wind whistled through the branches of trees already bare of leaves, and raced boisterously across the wide lawns and empty flower-beds, rushing away madly over the four miles of open country that isolated Otway House from the village.

Lady Constable had always hated windy nights; the girl kneeling by the fire could remember many occasions when the woman who lay upstairs at death's door had querulously bidden her play something on the piano to shut out the mournful sound of the wind raging round the old house, and to the girl it seemed an unkind freak of fate that to-night, of all nights, the wind should be ramping through the trees and across the garden, as if waiting for a prey which it knew could never escape.

Upstairs the footsteps sounded again, followed by the opening of a door and the sound of someone coming slowly downstairs, and the girl crouching by the fire raised her head and looked towards the door with growing dread in her eyes.

The steps drew nearer; a moment, and the door opened, and a man with grey hair, and spectacles pushed up over a lined forehead, came into the room.

The girl rose to her feet and stood waiting. It seemed a long time before he spoke; he was so slow, so slow! He shut the door with elaborate carefulness before he moved towards her. He took off his spectacles, polished them on a silk handkerchief, and put them away in a pocket before he even looked at her, then he cleared his throat and told her the thing of which she had all along really been aware:

"Lady Constable is dead."

The girl stared at him for a moment with-

out answering, then she shut her eyes and gave a long sigh, whether of relief or despair the man found it difficult to tell. Her thoughts were in confusion, she hardly knew if she were glad or sorry, if she wanted to cry or if she wanted to laugh; she could not believe as yet that this thing was really true, though for days past she had been prepared for it.

The one consciousness in her mind was that she was free!—free of the petty exactitudes and almost hourly nagging that had made her life unbearable; free of the endless task of fetching and carrying, of obeying and being bullied, and being forced to put up with an ever-growing unreasonable irritability.

She opened her eyes slowly and found the doctor looking at her interestedly.

She had never liked him; he had always seemed too much a part of the *ménage* at Otway, too much a part of everything which she had grown so heartily to detest; but now, for the first time of all the many that she had seen him come and go in the house, she realised that there was a certain kindness in the eyes that met her own, and in his voice when he spoke.

"These weeks must have been a great strain to you, my dear."

He had never called her "my dear" before, had never seemed in the least conscious of her presence, and a faint flush tinged the girl's face.

"Yes," she said shyly.

She moved away from him and sat down in one of the big chairs drawn up on either side of the fire; she was trembling in every limb.

The doctor went on talking; she listened to his platitudinous remarks like one in a dream.

She heard him say how much Lady Constable would be missed in the county, how ill she could be spared, and she wondered vaguely if he really believed in what he was saying, and if in all the years that he had attended the dead woman for real and imaginary ailments he had really never discovered her selfishness and meanness.

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She kept her eyes fixed steadily on the big chair opposite to the one in which she sat. Every night, for so many nights that she had long since lost count of them, Lady Constable had sat there and grumbled and pulled her neighbours to pieces; it seemed impossible that she would never see her there again, never listen any more to the shrill voice raised in its endless spitefulness and complaining.

The doctor moved closer to her, standing with his back to the fire, looking down at her. She heard him say that she must take care of herself, that she ought to go to bed and sleep, that she had had a trying time, very trying . . .

"I have always admired your pluck and courage, and your patience—your marvellous patience," she heard him say. "I hope you will always count on me as a friend," he said impressively, "as a very *special* friend. If there is anything I can do for you at any time I hope you will not hesitate to come to me."

The girl raised her eyes.

"Thank you; you are very kind," she said apathetically.

She wondered why he only made this offer of friendship now when she no longer desired it. There had been days—oh, so many of them!—when she had so longed for someone to say a kind word to her, to tell her that they understood, to sympathise; but now those days were ended.

He went on talking.

"I have wired for Fastnet; we can do nothing till he comes."

He paused, but she showed no interest, and he took a step towards the door.

"I will say good night. I shall come again in the morning. If there is anything I can do, remember—"

She interrupted wearily.

"Yes, yes. Thank you very much."

She followed him out into the hall and stood by while a servant helped him on with his coat. If Lady Constable had been alive she would not have been allowed to leave the drawing-room. It was strange how soon, after all, one could forget the training of years.

When the front door was opened a swirl of wind and rain swept into the hall; it was only with difficulty that the servant could close it again after the doctor's retreating figure.

Elizabeth Neale went back to the drawing-room and stirred the fire into a blaze; the little action gave her her second curious sense of freedom. She had never been allowed to poke the fire when Lady Constable was alive; the bell was always solemnly rung, and a servant came to perform the office for her. She laid the brass poker down almost nervously and looked round.

A servant tapped at the door.

"Mr. Ridgeway would like to see you a moment, please, miss."

The girl's heart gave a little quick throb, but she did not move from her crouching position by the fire even when she heard the quick step that followed the servant crossing the room towards her; yet when Ridgeway stooped and put his arms around her she turned her face against his shoulder and began to sob.

The strain of the past few days and the unaccustomed sense of freedom had completely broken her down; for a few moments she could only cling to him, shaken with helpless sobbing.

He let her alone; now and then he kissed her hair or lifted her hand to his lips. He waited till she was calmer before he spoke, then he said with unusual emotion in his voice:

"This is the first time I have ever been able to kiss you properly or have you to myself without dreading that the old lady would come in and catch us."

Elizabeth's sobbing stopped. She raised herself from his arms and shivered, looking away from him.

"I can't believe it's true, even now. I'm so afraid that soon I shall wake up and find it's all a dream."

"So you will—find that all the *past* has been a dream," he hastened to assure her. "We're going to be happy at last; we'll get married at once—you've had your share of rotten times. I'm going to make you so happy. . . ." He drew her back again into his arms and kissed her. For a little while neither of them spoke; suddenly he laughed.

"So she never guessed, not even up to the very last!" he said with a sort of wondering amusement. "She wasn't so cute as we thought, evidently. Great Scott! I wonder what she'd say if she could see us now?"

The girl's eyes travelled swiftly again to the empty chair opposite; even yet she could not quite rid herself of the feeling that all this was just make-believe, and that presently she would hear Lady Constable's acid voice saying that it was time for bed.

"She must have liked me, too, you know," Ridgeway went on in a ruminating voice. "She never seemed to mind how often I came to the house as long as I didn't pay much attention to you. She must have liked me in a sort of odd way, you know."

"I don't know how she could help liking you," she told him shyly.

He kissed her again.

"Flatterer!" He held her at arms' length. "Well, and when will you marry me?"

She could not meet his eyes, but a swift blush dyed her cheeks.

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"As soon as you like when—when all this is over."

He made a little grimace.

"Yes, I suppose we must wait for that." He put her from him, and rose to his feet. "What have you done?" he asked. "I mean, have any arrangements been made?"

She shook her head.

"I don't know. Dr. Granger said he had wired for Mr. Fastnet. He said we could do nothing till Mr. Fastnet came."

Ridgeway nodded.

"I suppose not. And you didn't see her? She didn't ask for you before—before she died?"

"No, she hasn't asked for me for days and days. I've waited, I've never been far away in case she should want me, but she never has."

He was quick to hear the hurt in her voice.

"She was incapable of affection for anyone," he said.

Elizabeth shook her head.

"Oh, no! She loved her nephew. She never told me so, but I know she did. Once I found her looking at his portrait—the one painted when he was quite a boy, that hangs in the long gallery. It was always kept with its face turned to the wall, but I found her looking at it one day, and she was so angry with me—I was terrified."

"Humph! Well, you needn't worry about that. Constable's been dead for years, hasn't he?"

"He's supposed to have died abroad, but Mrs. Dodds, the housekeeper, believes he is still alive."

There was a little silence. A clock on the mantelshelf struck ten solemnly.

Elizabeth started.

"I think you ought to go now. The servants will think it so strange."

He laughed.

"Let them! Who cares?" But he held out his hand to her. "Come and say good night to me, then."

She went to him readily enough; he was all she cared for in the world. The few stolen meetings with him were the only events that had saved her from madness during the past weeks. Even the dread that Lady Constable might discover that they loved one another had not been able to mar their sweetness; and now the fear of discovery was at an end—she could love this man wholeheartedly, she could take the happiness lying within her reach.

"And so we begin to be really happy from this moment," he told her as they kissed. "It's time you thought of yourself; you have given up all these years to her selfishness. She would have ruined your life if she had lived much longer."

"Oh, hush!" She looked again towards

the empty chair by the fire as if dreading to meet once more the sharp eyes that had followed her every movement.

Ridgeway laughed.

"There's nothing to be afraid of any more," he assured her.

She leaned her head against his shoulder. It was all a dream, of course, she told herself; it was too great a happiness to be real.

Even when he had gone, and she stole up the staircase to her own room, she could not believe that the events of the evening had really happened. She was sure, as she undressed and crept into bed, that in the morning she would wake up and find it nothing but a dream.

Outside the wind howled and shrieked round the house, and the branches of the old elm tree outside the window creaked protestingly as they were swayed to and fro, but Elizabeth Neale lay with wide eyes, staring sleeplessly into the darkness.

Ten years since, as a girl of fifteen, she had come to Otway—ten years during which she had almost daily made up her mind that she would not stay, that each night should be her last in the dreary house; and yet now that, after all, death had taken away the woman whose will and influence had chained her hand and foot, the years had come and gone, and still found her here.

"I give you a good home," so Lady Constable had said to her on more than one occasion. "You suit me very well, and I will see that you do not suffer in the future. What more do you want?"

Elizabeth had sometimes wondered if that vague promise had ever meant anything, if, perhaps, it might have meant—money.

Her heart gave a little throb of excitement as she lay there in the darkness.

Her cheeks burned as she thought what it might mean to her. Her mind leapt ahead into a future in which she could spend and spend and still spend!

Dr. Granger had spoken of how much Lady Constable would be missed in the village. Surely he could not have meant it? Surely he must have known that Lady Constable never gave to charity?

What would become of all the money now, she wondered? She had no *real* hope that any of it would come her way, even though the dead woman had no relatives in the world for which, as she expressed it, she cared the "snap of a chicken bone." She had never had any children of her own, and the nephew of whom she had once been fond had long ago quarrelled with her and gone away, and was supposed to have died abroad.

Whether she regretted him or not, Elizabeth never had any means of knowing, save the evidence of that one moment when she had

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found Lady Constable looking at the turned portrait in the long gallery.

But there were still servants in the house and people in the village who remembered young Constable, even though his aunt so determinedly set herself to forget him, and now and again, when her mistress was safely out of the way, the old housekeeper would speak of him to Elizabeth.

"The life and soul of the house, he was," she would say sadly. "It was just as if everything became dead when he went away."

"I don't wonder he went away," Elizabeth answered. "I only wish I could go too."

The housekeeper looked at her in faint surprise.

"Well, and why not?" she asked, rather tartly.

The girl shook her head.

"I don't know. There's something that seems to keep me," she explained haltingly. "I don't know what it is—unless, perhaps, I'm sorry for her loneliness."

To-night as she lay there in the darkness and looked back it seemed the only real explanation. She had been sorry for Lady Constable—sorry for her harsh unyieldingness, sorry for her lonely and friendless condition.

Elizabeth was an orphan; she had been brought up in a convent school by Sisters who, if not actually unkind, were never affectionate or sympathetic. They had taken her when she was two years old, together with a sum of money, from a man who had called himself her father.

"He promised to come in a year's time," so they told her the story, "but we never saw him again, and the money has long since been spent, so you will have to work as soon as you are old enough."

They had considered her old enough when she was fifteen, and had sent her to Lady Constable, who was a Roman Catholic, and from whom they had great hopes of a substantial legacy in the future.

They had told Elizabeth that she was a most fortunate girl, that it was a post any girl would desire—to be with a rich and titled woman, in a luxurious mansion; to have everything she wanted in the world, in fact.

They only considered her ungrateful and dissatisfied when, after one week, she wrote to them begging to be taken back.

The grandeur of the house frightened and oppressed her after the severe simplicity of the convent school; the silence and loneliness wore her nerves threadbare.

They forwarded her letter to Lady Constable, and Elizabeth had never dared to repeat the offence.

That was all ten years ago; and looking back on those years now, she knew that the

only bright spot in their dreariness had been the presence of Claude Ridgeway.

She closed her eyes in the darkness with a thrill of happiness as she recalled his kisses. She was engaged to him, and soon now, quite soon, they would be married—and live happily ever after, as people did in the books which Lady Constable had always designated as "trash."

"There is no such thing as love and romance in all the world," she told Elizabeth many times. "If you search every corner of the universe you will never find it."

But Elizabeth believed that she had found it here already, in Otway. She loved Claude Ridgeway with all the ardour of a girl's untried and starved affection.

He had made love to her behind Lady Constable's back; he had snatched kisses almost from beneath the old lady's very eyes, believing himself undiscovered; he had sent love-letters to Elizabeth through a servant, whom he paid extravagantly; he had, in fact, carried on his wooing on the edge of a mine.

If Lady Constable had dreamed of what was going on she would have forbidden him the house, they both knew; but as it was, she seemed to encourage him to come.

"I like his father," so she told Elizabeth once. "His father is a fool, as most men are, but I like him because he is an honest fool. He never asks me to subscribe to charities, of which he knows I disapprove."

Claude Ridgeway's father was vicar of Otway—a humble, God-fearing man, who had never ceased to wonder how on earth he ever managed to beget a son of such exactly opposite characteristics.

Claude had been the great trouble of his life; he had pinched and denied himself for years to pay his son's debts at Cambridge.

It never occurred to Claude that he might turn to and do some work himself, and help pay off the amounts owing. He was quite content to idle his time away at home, and wait for something to turn up.

"I shall marry a rich wife, and everything will be all right," was the thought with which he comforted himself.

He was good-looking enough to please most women, and so when he ran across Elizabeth Neale, and heard that in all probability she would one day inherit the bulk of Lady Constable's wealth, he set himself to storm the poor little citadel of her heart.

Elizabeth knew nothing about men, and this one seemed to her inexperience a god sent straight from Olympus to turn her life to sunshine.

And now they were to be married—soon, quite soon, so he had said. Her own blissful happiness added to her pity for that

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still, unloved woman lying alone in the room at the end of the long corridor, with the candles burning at the foot of the bed.

She turned her face against the pillow, and closed her eyes with a little sigh of deep thankfulness.

The years of her imprisonment were ended. She was to be alone in the world no longer. He had kissed her and said that he loved her. She was precious to someone at last.

CHAPTER II Disillusioned

MMR. FASTNET cleared his throat, settled his glasses, and looked round the room at the group of expectant faces.

His keen eyes seemed to take in at a glance these people who had turned up from all parts of the country in the hope that the relative with whom they had one and all long since quarrelled, and cordially hated, might have relented at the last and remembered that blood is thicker than water.

As the dead woman's solicitor, he knew most of them by sight, or had at least received and answered many begging letters from them, always with a curt refusal to oblige with the large or small loan desired; and a faintly ironical smile curved his lips now as he realised what an acute disappointment lay in store for them all.

His eyes rested last of all upon Elizabeth Neale—a pale, shrinking Elizabeth in her black frock, huddled up in a big chair which she hoped was hiding her little figure from the unfriendly eyes of those around her.

Mr. Fastnet knew Elizabeth well, and had always profoundly pitied her, and his keen eyes softened a little now as he met the timid glances she cast at him from time to time.

Someone had told him that her age was twenty-five, but she looked more like seventeen, he thought, with her small, pale face and scared blue eyes, and the soft masses of childishly fair hair that fell about her face and forehead.

He found himself wondering for the hundredth time how she had ever come into Lady Constable's household, and why she had stayed for so many years.

He cleared his throat again, and unfolded the crackling sheets of parchment before him.

"The will which I am about to read is very short and severely simple, and will not detain you for long. It was made by Lady Constable some months before her death—last June, to be exact."

He cleared his throat again, and began to read from the parchment sheets before him.

There were a few, a very few, bequests to servants, and an annuity of one hundred pounds to the housekeeper, Mrs. Dodds.

"The remainder of my property I give and bequeath absolutely to Elizabeth Neale, my companion, not because I have any overwhelming regard or affection for her, but because by this gift I know full well I shall incur the lasting hatred of my dear friends and relations, who have only tolerated me for years for the sake of what they have hoped to get out of me at my death. I do not believe in love or affection; in all my life I have had none, and I wish there to be no pretence of any when I am gone. I make the above will subject to one condition, which is that the said Elizabeth Neale shall neither now nor at any other time contract a marriage with Claude Nottingham Ridge-way, for whom I leave a letter that will show him I was not quite so blind as he imagined. Should Elizabeth Neale refuse to carry out these conditions, the whole of my property and estates shall revert to my nephew, Nicholas Constable, with whom I quarrelled twelve years ago, but who I believe is still living."

There was a tragic silence. All eyes in the room were turned to Elizabeth. The girl was sitting bolt upright in the big chair, her eyes fixed on Mr. Fastnet's face with a sort of piteous entreaty in their depths. There was a hectic spot of colour in each of her cheeks, and her hands gripped the arms of the chair convulsively.

Once her lips moved as if she would have spoken, but no sound passed them, and Mr. Fastnet went on quietly:

"That is, I think, all that need be made public." He took off his glasses, and began to fold up the papers strewn around him.

Elizabeth sat like a stone. She hardly heard what went on around her; the babel of voices and the loud expressions of indignation passed her by. Her thoughts were in a whirl.

She was rich—rich beyond the dreams of avarice—if she chose! But only on condition that she did not marry Claude Ridge-way either now or at any other time.

For the moment she could not absorb the facts. She was quite conscious of them, but they conveyed no particular meaning to her.

Mr. Fastnet put his papers away, and came across to where she sat.

"May I be the first to congratulate you?" he said. He took her limp hand in his and patted it gently.

Elizabeth started and looked up.

"I don't want the money," she said. "I shall marry him all the same, and the money can go."

They were alone in the room now. The relatives who had come from all over the country on this forlorn hope had gone off, arguing and quarrelling, to partake of the refreshment which was apparently all they could expect to receive.

Mr. Fastnet shrugged his shoulders.

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There was a little indulgent smile in his eyes.

"You cannot decide such a momentous question so hurriedly," he told her. "You must see Mr. Ridgeway first, and talk things over."

She shook her head.

"My mind is quite made up. If I have to choose between him and the money, I have already chosen him."

There was a high-pitched note of excitement in her voice, and her eyes looked feverish. Mr. Fastnet saw that argument was useless; she was not in the mood to reason, and after a moment he went quietly away, leaving her sitting there in the big chair.

Elizabeth sat for a long time without moving; there was no great emotion in her heart, but only a fixed purpose that shone steadily before her.

It was like Lady Constable to have made that condition, she thought with dull resentment; like Lady Constable to give a thing with one hand and take it away with the other.

In an overstrung imagination she could hear her sneering voice speaking as she had so often heard it:

"There is no such thing as love and romance in all the world. If you search every corner of the universe you will never find it."

She could have laughed aloud. No such things as love and romance, when she had her lover's protestations and kisses with which to disprove such a lie! The clasp of his arms to assure her that she was his world, even as he was hers!

She slipped from the room and out into the hall. Through the closed door of the dining-room she could hear the sound of arguing voices and the clatter of glasses and teacups, and she almost ran to the stairs and up to her own room.

They hated her, all these people with the eager, greedy eyes who had come to Otway for what they could get. She had felt their hatred in the silence after the will had been read, and it gave her a thrill of relief to know that she was going to kill that hatred once and for ever.

She did not want the dead woman's money. They were welcome to it, all of them, if only they left her love.

All her life she had been starved for love. She clung to it now with all the intensity of her weak body.

She kissed the hand that wore his ring. He had only given it to her last night, and the flash of the diamonds in their band of gold still thrilled her when she looked at them.

Oh, she was happy, happy! She cared for nothing but his love. There was no longer anything to prevent their marriage. She could leave Otway as soon as she liked.

She stayed in her room to avoid the people downstairs. It was some time before she heard them go away, some time before a servant came to tell her that Ridgeway was waiting to see her.

She almost flew down the stairs to him, her eyes sparkling, her cheeks flushed. In the hall she encountered Mr. Fastnet. He put out his hand to check her.

"Wait a moment," he said. There was an odd note in his voice, his eyes somehow looked sorry as she raised her own to his.

He held her hand as he said very gently:

"I have seen Ridgeway; he knows all about the will. I thought you would prefer that I told him."

She almost laughed.

"What does it matter? But thank you for telling him."

She drew her hand from his, and went on to the library, where she knew Ridgeway waited for her. She shut the door behind her, and went forward with eager expectancy.

Ridgeway stood with one hand resting on the mantelshelf, looking down into the fire. He did not turn when she entered, and she thought he had not heard her. She went up softly behind him, and slipped a shy hand through his arm, laying her cheek to his sleeve.

She was so happy to be with him again, and to know that now nothing mattered any more but just their two selves. She was confident of what he would say—that they would be married at once, perhaps even to-morrow—perhaps.

Ridgeway moved; he drew his arm from her clasp almost roughly, and what he said was:

"Well, we've come a fine cropper, haven't we?"



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'The remainder of my property I give and bequeath . . . '—p. 359.

She fell back a step, the colour racing from her cheeks. She did not think she could have heard him aright. She stared at him with wide eyes, and lips parted like a child's.

"Why—why—"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"You know what I mean," he said almost angrily. "It's just as well to cut out the sentiment and get to business. This will, it's upset our apple-cart pretty completely, as you know. I haven't a bob in the world. It means that everything is at an end between us, of course."

He did not look at her as he spoke; did not see the deathly pallor that spread slowly from chin to brow. He went on in savage anger:

"I always thought she was a mean old brute, but I never believed she'd be as bad as this—to make such a will, such—such brutally unfair conditions!"

Drawn by
Norah Schlegel.

Elizabeth drew a long breath. She caught at his hand.

"Oh, but you don't understand," she said in faltering eagerness. "I

don't want the money—I've told Mr. Fastnet I don't. I shall give it up—I don't want it! What do I care for the money if I can't have you?"

He stared at her with eyes that gradually grew ashamed. His voice softened unwillingly when at last he answered:

"We can't live on love. It's all rot to suppose that anyone can. I'm in debt up to my eyes now—even that ring I gave you last night isn't paid for, and goodness only knows when it will be—now!" He stopped, checked by the tragedy of her eyes.

There was a moment's silence, then he rushed on again:

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"Look at the letter she left for me, the horrid cat! Read it! Perhaps it will explain things to you better than I can."

He thrust the letter into her hand and turned away. He began pacing up and down the room agitatedly.

He was white with anger and bitter disappointment. He had been so sure that this venture, at least, would not fail him! Besides the ruin that stared him in the face, he bated the disillusionment that had all unconsciously looked at him through Elizabeth's eyes.

She had loved him so wholeheartedly. He cursed his luck savagely under his breath.

Elizabeth was trying to read the few lines written in the thin, sloping hand she knew so well, but everything danced giddily before her eyes, and it was some seconds ere she could focus anything distinctly.

"Stolen kisses may be sweet, but they don't deceive me as they have deceived the poor little fool who believes that you love her. Marry Elizabeth if you please, but marry her without a penny of my money. She believes in love and romance; as your wife she would lose that belief in an hour. It will give her a lesser pang to lose it now, and in a way which I have chosen to dictate."

Elizabeth read the words through twice before she could properly grasp them, then she raised her eyes heavily to Ridgeway's face, and her pale lips parted in one heart-broken question:

"Is it true—and don't you—really—love me?"

He looked at her, and his courage failed him. He came back to where she stood, and put his arms around her stiffly unresponsive figure.

"Love isn't any use without money to keep it going," he said in rough explanation. "I know people say it is, but they're fools. They don't know what they are talking about. Love doesn't work when you bring it down to everyday life with about tuppence to live on! I haven't a shilling in the world. I'm fond of you, of course I am—but we can't get married, and that's all about it. I'm sorry—of course I'm sorry—" He broke off jaggedly. He had never felt such a scamp in all his life. He looked at Elizabeth, and turned his eyes hurriedly from the frozen tragedy of her face.

"It's for your sake as well as for my own," he said again with a sort of rage. "It's the only decent thing I can do. I don't want you to spoil your life for me! You—you haven't the least idea what it is that you are offering to throw away without a second thought, and all for my sweet

sake!" There was a note of irony in his voice.

"It's—it's sweet of you to offer. I'm not worth it . . ." He laughed mirthlessly. "You go on and take what you can get, and have a good time. When you know the world as well as I do, you won't be so ready and anxious to refuse when it offers you anything decent. Lady Constable led you a rotten life—she owes it to you to make it up to you—don't be silly and refuse it. Have a good time—go about and enjoy yourself. You'll meet some other chap—a better chap than I am . . ."

He looked at her, and for the first time a realisation of all that he was losing rushed over him; for the moment at least he forgot the money and his own disappointment, and saw only the youth and sweetness and unselfishness of this girl who had been ready and willing to give up everything for him. He held out his arms to her with sudden passion.

"We'll have to kiss and say good-bye, Elizabeth," he said huskily. "If I were a rich man I believe I'd be the happiest man in the world with you, but as it is—" He caught her hand, trying to draw her into his arms. "Kiss me, and say that you don't feel too badly about it," he urged.

He had all a man's selfish desire to rid himself of the shame which of his own will he could not disperse. He wanted her to forgive him, to say that she understood the position and did not blame him, but Elizabeth drew back.

"You say there isn't such a thing as love," she said with painful clearness. "The sort of love I want, at least—" She drew a long breath. "Well, I say that there is! I know that there is! I know that some day I shall find someone who will care for me as I would have cared for you—if you had let me."

"Elizabeth!" said Ridgeway hoarsely.

He was as white as she now, and there was a look of fear in his eyes. Did he love her in the right way, after all? he was asking himself desperately. A sudden great longing to be the man Elizabeth had believed him to be filled his selfish heart, but he put down the longing with an iron hand.

Without money he was ruined! He must have money to carry him on at all. The arms he had impulsively held out to her fell to his sides; he made no attempt to follow her when she laid his ring down on the table and walked past him with down-bent head to the door.

He knew that she paused there for a moment, and that she looked back at him, but he did not move, and he heard her pass on again and out of the room, and the soft shutting of the door behind her.

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CHAPTER III

Flight

MR. FASTNET paced up and down agitatedly.

"It's absurd! preposterous!" he said agitatedly. "You must be—pardon my plain speaking, my dear child—but you must be mad! To refuse such a fortune—such an enormous fortune!—you can't realise what it is you are suggesting." He stopped beside the table where Elizabeth sat, and looked down at her with angry eyes.

"Come, come!" he said more quietly. "Think it over, and be reasonable. What are you going to do if you refuse this money, as you say you intend to do? How can you live? You have no money of your own."

"I can work," said Elizabeth.

"Work!" He pushed a chair out of his way with an irritable hand, and resumed his pacing.

"What work can you do, pray," he demanded—"a delicate slip of a girl like you?"

Elizabeth smiled faintly.

"Anyway, I shall not take the money," she persisted with a determination that astonished Mr. Fastnet. "I have no claim to it; I don't want it. I would much rather Nicholas Constable came home and took it. It ought to have been his—it will be his as I have refused it. Lady Constable was fond of him—I know she was, though she would have killed me if I had ever dared to say so. He was the only person in all the world she cared for. Oh!" she broke out with a sudden touch of passion, "why can't you see that I mean what I say, and help me? I only want to get away from here. Otway has been a prison to me for the last ten years. I hate it—oh, you don't know how I hate it!"

Mr. Fastnet came over to where she sat. She looked very frail and weak, he thought, and his heart ached for her, but her surprising stubbornness angered him. He could not believe that she was serious in what she said. To refuse such a fortune seemed to him sheer madness.

"You say you can work," he said more patiently. "What sort of work can you do? You have never done a hand's turn of real work since you came to the house. People will not pay you a living wage to fetch and carry as you did for Lady Constable. Fetching books or arranging flowers is not work. You may have had a hard time here—I am not denying that you have—but it has been nothing to what you will have to put up with if you persist in this folly. Most girls of your age would be wild with delight at what has happened. Come, tell me honestly what is your real objection to taking the money?"

Elizabeth raised her blue eyes—troubled, perplexed eyes they were.

"I want someone to love me just for myself, that's why," she said at last, almost in a whisper. "If I have all this money, they will only love me for that, as—as Mr. Ridgeway did; or—or as he pretended to," she added falteringly.

Mr. Fastnet shrugged his shoulders. He had never had any opinion of Ridgeway, and he considered that Elizabeth had had a most lucky escape. He did not understand what a terrible shock it had been to her, or how painfully she shrank from taking the money which had been the cause of her disillusionment.

"There are plenty of decent men in the world with whom money would not count at all," he told her. He held out his hand. "Promise me, at least, not to do anything for the present. Think it over—give yourself a little time." He rubbed his chin agitatedly. "I very much wish Nicholas Constable were here to help me persuade you."

Elizabeth laughed mirthlessly.

"Oh, he wouldn't do that! He'd be only too glad to see the last of me so that he could have the money," she said with bitterness. "I suppose he has had your cable by this time?"

"I suppose so, if he is alive, which I rather doubt myself. It seems odd, if he is, that nothing should have been heard of him all these years."

"Something would soon be heard of him if he knew there was a fortune waiting for him," Elizabeth said with unconscious cynicism.

Mr. Fastnet shook his head sadly.

"I am hoping that we shall never have to tell him that," he said. He really was hoping it. He would like to have seen Elizabeth mistress at Otway. In spite of his dry-as-dustness, he had a warm corner in his heart for the girl.

"But at least you have promised me to think it over," he said again as he took up his hat to go.

"Yes," said Elizabeth, but her voice was indifferent, and Mr. Fastnet shook his head sadly again, and went away.

She gave a long sigh then, and rose to her feet, stretching her arms wide to the empty room.

The last few days had been an eternity to her; she felt as if a lifetime had passed since here in this very room she had heard Ridgeway confess that without money he had no use for her.

She had not seen him since that night, but she had heard that he was no longer in Otway, and now her own great longing was to get away from it too—to cut the past from behind her, to map out a life for herself.

Already she was beginning to look for-

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ward to something better than she had hitherto known, to a freedom which she was sure could never really be hers if she accepted this fortune which had only been left to her in order to spite those who had hoped for it.

Lady Constable and Ridgeway had both told her that there was no such thing as love and romance. Well, she would see for herself. She would go into the world and mix with real people, and see life as it really was beyond the confines of Otway.

She looked at the clock. Nearly four already, and the day was beginning to draw in; the room was filling with shadows.

She went to her own room; she put on her hat and coat, and from under the bed drew a little bag which she had packed last night in readiness. Then, with a last look round, she went softly back again down the wide staircase and out into the dusky garden.

It was a warm day for October; a gentle breeze fanned her face as she hurried on down the wide paths between the empty flower-beds. Her pulses were racing, her heart throbbed with excitement of the unknown to which she was going. For the first time in her life she felt free and unfettered.

She almost ran the four miles to Otway village. There was a London train due when she reached the station, and until it came in she kept well back in the shadows so that nobody should recognise her.

She caught a glimpse of Dr. Granger at the far end of the platform, and her heart gave a little throb of fear. She had never liked him, and she had been shrewd enough to guess that his unexpected offer of friendship after Lady Constable's death had only been prompted by his belief that she would inherit some of the dead woman's wealth. She wondered if all her life now she would be suspicious of people and question their motives; if Claude Ridgeway had effectively killed her belief in goodness and sincerity?

She found an empty carriage in the train, and turned up the big collar of her coat to hide her face. She gave a deep sigh of relief when at length the train started and nobody entered the compartment.

Soon Otway was left behind; soon they were racing on towards the London which she had only visited twice in her life, and then on business with Lady Constable—both dull, uninteresting journeys, which had left no impression behind save that of boredom and weariness.

She took out her purse and tipped its contents into her lap. She carefully counted the money, which was all she had been able to save out of the meagre salary doled out to her. It came to something under ten pounds, but it seemed wealth to Elizabeth.

She had no smallest idea of the value of

money; she had never had to spend it on the necessities of life. She was almost as ignorant of the world and its ways now, at five and twenty, as she had been when she left the convent school, ten years before.

She supposed vaguely that it would be more than enough to keep her till she could find work. She supposed that in a place as big and busy as London one only had to ask for work in order to get it.

Presently she let the window down and peered into the darkness.

Away in the distance she could see many lights, and for the first time something like fear touched her heart.

She realised that she had nowhere to go when the train set her down in London, and that she was quite alone.

The cold rush of night air through the open window chilled her, and she rose to close it again; but before she could do so the train swerved and rocked violently, there was a pandemonium of noise, a grinding crash that seemed to rush at her from every corner of the earth, then something caught her up as if with mighty wings and dashed her down into abysmal darkness.

CHAPTER IV

Adventure

ELIZABETH opened her eyes to a dark sky and myriads of stars that seemed to be looking down at her with friendly concern.

She lay quite still for a moment, feeling sick and giddy, and in that moment someone slipped an arm beneath her head, raising it gently, and holding something to her lips.

"Try and drink a little. There—that's better."

She coughed and choked, then tried to struggle into a sitting position, and the hands holding her back released her at once.

"Better? That's good! I don't think there's any serious damage. Let me help you up."

A strong arm lifted her to her feet and steadied her. The cold night wind beat on her face, and slowly drove away the feeling of sick giddiness. She opened her eyes.

"What is it? Where am I?" There was terror in her voice; she clutched at the arm supporting her.

The same quiet voice answered her reassuringly:

"It's all right. The train ran off the lines. No, I shouldn't look if I were you." He hastily interposed his big figure between her and the terrible scene on the side of the embankment. He went on talking soothingly:

"As soon as you feel able I'll take you along to the station. Luckily the train

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wasn't far out when it happened. Can you walk?" He half released her to allow her to try, but Elizabeth staggered and would have fallen but for his support.

"I'll carry you," he said briefly.

He swung her up into his arms as if she had been a child, and after the first faint protest she let her head rest against his shoulder, and closed her eyes.

As yet she felt too dazed to try and remember, too shaken to ask any more questions. It was only when she felt that she was being set down on her feet again that she opened her eyes and looked at the man who had carried her.

He was a tall man, with an amazing look of strength about him, and a bronzed, rather hard face that was just now a little flushed.

He wore no hat, and his hair, which was thick and grew in rather an unruly fashion without a parting, was just now ruffled about his head by the night breeze.

As he met her eyes he passed a self-conscious hand over his hair and smiled.

"I've lost my hat. Won't you sit down? If you will give me your name and address I'll send a wire to your friends to say you are safe."

Elizabeth looked around her. They were in the waiting-room of a station, and there were several other people there being attended to by a man who looked like a doctor.

One woman lay full length on the seat, groaning; there was a gash on her face, and Elizabeth averted her eyes with a sick shudder.

The man beside her spoke again:

"I will send a wire to your friends if you will let me have the address. They will be anxious."

She raised her eyes to him then. After a moment she asked a halting question:

"And there—will there be anyone killed?"

She saw the faint look of amazement that crossed his face. He answered rather curtly:

"I am afraid so. It is a bad smash, and one of the coaches caught fire." He saw her sway a little, and he put his hands on her shoulders, forcing her to sit down on the bench behind her.

"If you will give me your address," he said again with a touch of impatience.

Elizabeth shook her head.

"There is no address—I mean, there is no one who will want to know. I haven't anyone."

He looked incredulous.

"But you must have come from somewhere; you must at least be going somewhere?" he insisted gently. He thought she did not understand.

She shook her head again.

"No, I'm not going anywhere—at least, I don't know where I am going," she ex-

plained incoherently. She rose weakly to her feet. "But please don't you bother about me. I'm all right; you see."

She became aware for the first time that she had lost her bag. She gave a little distressed cry.

"Oh, my money! Oh, where is it? I must go back and find it."

She took a step towards the door, but the man stopped her.

"You can't go back. You're not fit to do anything but go straight to bed and have a good rest. Besides"—his face twisted into a wry smile—"I'm afraid you'll have a poor chance of finding anything in all that wreckage. The coach you were in caught fire. You had a most wonderful escape. We had to work like mad to get you out in time as it was. I can let you have any money you want, and you can repay me later on. There is a telegraph office on the platform. All wires are to be delivered tonight, no matter how late." He waited a moment. "Why will you be so obstinate?" he said again. "Surely you don't want your people to be left in anxiety about you? There must be someone who will worry—someone who cares?"

Elizabeth laughed—at least, she thought she laughed, but it was just the weakest sound that passed her lips.

"That's just it," she said pitifully. "There isn't anyone! Oh, don't I wish there was!" she added in sobbing parenthesis.

The man looked at her frowningly; there was a sort of disbelief in his eyes.

"Look here," he said at last, "you're upset and overtired by all this. To-morrow you'll be able to give a better account of yourself. Let me take you along to the place where I'm staying. They'll look after you there. Will you trust me to do that?"

Elizabeth looked up. There were tears in her eyes, and her lips trembled.

"I must now I've lost my money," she said.

He made a little impatient gesture.

"There's not the slightest need to. If you would prefer—" He broke off, as two big tears overflowed from her eyes and splashed on to her coat.

"I'm not going to argue with you any more," he said with sudden change of voice. "You're worn out. Wait a moment while I see if I can get a car. I won't be a moment."

He was gone before she could answer, and Elizabeth closed her eyes, leaning her head weakly against the wall behind her.

If she had started out to find adventure, she had certainly got more than she wanted, she was telling herself tremulously. Here she was, in a place entirely strange to her, and in the charge of a man whom she had never seen in her life before.

What would Lady Constable say if she

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could know? What would Mr. Fastnet say? And Ridgeway?

A little thrill shook her as she realised how utterly free this night's adventure could leave her if she chose. If she did not communicate with Otway they would believe that she had been killed in the accident. They would not trouble to inquire further for her. They would cease to worry her about money and about the future. She would be free to arrange her own life as she thought fit.

She opened her eyes to find the man beside her again.

"I've got a car," he said. "And the place where I am staying is only about a mile away. I'll take you there; they will see that you are made comfortable. I have just 'phoned them to say that we are coming."

He put an arm about her, helping her to rise. She was amazed to find how weak she was. She sank down into the seat of the car gratefully. She half dozed as they sped on through the darkness. Presently her head nodded against the man beside her, and she lay there contentedly enough, her cheek pillow'd against his arm.

He looked down at her once or twice with a half-comical, half-puzzled look on his face. Once, when the car jerked, he slipped his arm round her to hold her more comfortably. She seemed to be fast asleep when the driver stopped and got down to open the door.

The man lifted Elizabeth in his arms and carried her into the house. The door was wide open, and a woman came hurriedly to meet them.

She gave a little cry when she saw the inert figure in the man's arms.

He explained quickly.

"It's all right. I don't think she's really hurt, but she had a bad shock. I suppose really I ought not to have brought her, but I knew what it would mean if I didn't—the hospital, or perhaps the infirmary. She'll be all right after a good night's rest. If you'll show me which room—"

He followed the woman upstairs, with Elizabeth still in his arms. He laid her down on the bed, and stood for a moment looking down at her.

"She's quite a child, isn't she?" he said suddenly.

The woman, bending over Elizabeth, looked up sharply, struck by a subtle note in his voice.

"She looks very young," she said non-committally. "Now, if you'll just go away, Mr. Saxon—"

Saxon turned on his heel obediently.

He went slowly downstairs again, and into a sitting-room, where a bright fire was burning. Now the excitement was over he felt a trifle ashamed of the impulse that had prompted him to bring this girl to the

house; he felt that it must look strange to Mrs. Seeley, for one thing.

She was the soul of goodness and all that was charitable, but he had been quick to notice the look in her eyes as she turned from bending over the girl to answer his question.

And there was her daughter to be considered too! What would she think when she came in and found that he had brought a strange girl to the house? He tried to rid himself of the uncomfortable conviction that he had behaved foolishly. After all, it was only for one night; to-morrow the girl would be able to give an account of herself, and then he could communicate with her friends.

He waited till Mrs. Seeley came downstairs again. She was smiling as he went to meet her.

"Sleeping—sleeping beautifully!" she said in an unnecessary whisper. "Nothing for you to worry about at all, Mr. Saxon—nothing!"

Saxon flushed uncomfortably.

"Oh, I wasn't worrying," he said hastily.



But it was two days before Elizabeth was well enough to be questioned, and on the third day, when she crept downstairs to the sitting-room, she looked like a little wan ghost, and Saxon, who had been nervously waiting for her, forgot his nervousness in an overwhelming pity as he met the timid glance of her blue eyes.

He tucked her up comfortable in an armchair by the fire, and stood opposite to her, feeling more awkward and disgustingly robust than ever in his life before.

"I am glad you are better," he said at last awkwardly. "I am afraid you've had a pretty bad time of it."

Elizabeth smiled faintly.

"I was just—tired! That was all." Her blue eyes searched his face gratefully. "You've been so kind! I don't know what I should have done if it hadn't been for you."

Saxon coloured a little.

"Oh, it wasn't anything. I just happened to come along, and there you are!" he explained haltingly. "I—I hate to worry you, but—but if you could just let me know where I can find your friends—"

"I have no friends." Her voice was firmer as she made her denial. She raised herself a little from the cushions she had placed behind her.

"There is nobody I need trouble to send to," she went on with a touch of excitement. "Please believe me. I shan't worry you for long. Of course, I know I've been a dreadful trouble to you, but—"

He interrupted her almost angrily.

"It's absurd to say that. I'm only too

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glad—too pleased to have been able to do the little I have done. You won't be fit to leave the house for days, at least. Aren't you comfortable here? Aren't they doing all they can for you? If there is anything they—"

"I'm quite comfortable. Mrs. Seeley is most kind, but—"her voice faltered a little—"you know I haven't any money. I told you. I've lost everything I had. I must owe you ever so much as it is. I must go and work, so that I can pay you back."

"Work!" he echoed. "What sort of work can you do?" There was a note of laughter in his voice. "I don't believe you've ever done any work in all your life," he submitted, half chaffingly.

He had forgotten her weakness; he was horrified to see the ready tears in her eyes; he was all contrition instantly.

"I beg your pardon. Don't cry, for goodness' sake! I didn't mean to hurt you. It's only that you're so young—such a child!"

She gulped back a sob.

"I'm twenty-five," she said.

"Twenty-five!" he echoed, amazed. "Why, you look more like seventeen. Where have they buried you all these years?"

"I was brought up in a convent school," she began unthinkingly. "And then—" she stopped, biting her lip.

"And then?" he encouraged gently, but she would not go on; she had said more now than she had intended.

He guessed something of her thoughts. He changed the subject.

"You have not told me your name yet," he said. "I dare say you have heard mine from Mrs. Seeley. My name is Saxon."

"Yes, she told me. Do you live here?"

"I do for the present, yes. I've only been in England a few weeks, on a holiday. I can't afford the sort of hotel I should like to stay in, and I hate cheap ones, so I came here. Mrs. Seeley lets lodgings, you know—that's what it really is—though she calls us paying guests."

"Yes." She did not sound interested, and he repeated his question. "You have not told me your name?"

Her pale face flushed, and her eyes fell.

"My name is Beth," she said falteringly—"Beth Granger."

She never knew what made her give the name of Lady Constable's doctor, but with odd incongruity it was the only one of which she could think at the moment.

Saxon was a man of keen perception. He was positive that she had not told him her real name, but he made no comment.

"Beth!" he repeated. "Then I suppose you must have been christened Elizabeth?"

She raised startled eyes.

"They always called me Beth at the convent school," she said faintly.

There was a little silence, then Saxon said:

"And so you won't let me wire to—anyone?"

She shook her head.

"There isn't anyone to wire to. I was just going to—to find some work in London when—when I met you."

"Which wasn't altogether an unfortunate thing, perhaps," he answered her whimsically. "It's all wrong, this idea of your going to London to earn your living. You're too young, too—pretty!"

Elizabeth flushed all over her delicate face.

"Oh," she said softly, "nobody has ever called me pretty before!"

The words were so charmingly unaffected, the delight in her eyes so undoubtedly, that Saxon flushed to the roots of his hair.

For a moment he stood looking at her, unable to speak, then he turned on his heel abruptly.

"I shall tire you out if I stay any longer," he said rather brusquely. He came back, bent, and laid his hand on hers for a moment, then he went hurriedly from the room.

Elizabeth sat quite still till she was sure that he had really gone, then she left her chair, and, standing on tip-toe, looked at herself in the glass above the mantelshelf.

"I wondered if he really—really meant it?" she queried softly.

CHAPTER V

Romance

MRS. SEELEY was one of those semi-genteel people who, as she herself expressed it, had "had her ups and downs."

She assured Saxon, when he first knocked on her door and inquired for rooms, that it went sadly against the grain for her to have to take in paying guests at all. She explained to him that once upon a time she had been used to her own servants, and that until recently she had done her best to bring her daughter up as a lady!

When Saxon saw the daughter, who gloried in the name of "Poppy," he felt that he could sympathise with what had evidently been a vain attempt on her mother's part, for the girl was vulgar and common, and invariably overdressed, and after having vainly attempted to coax Saxon into a flirtation, she suddenly took a violent dislike to him, and let him see that she had on every possible occasion.

She carried that dislike to Elizabeth before the girl had been in the house a week; in various little ways she contrived to make life uncomfortable for her. She knew that Elizabeth was afraid of her, and for that

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reason she insisted on waiting on the girl as much as possible.

"There's something strange about her, you mark my words," she said to her mother over and over again. "She's deep, behind that baby look of hers. I don't trust her."

Mrs. Seeley sighed. She could not afford to be suspicious, and as long as her guests paid their way and were inoffensive, she thought it as well to leave them alone.

"Mr. Saxon's paying for her—I know he is," Poppy declared one evening. "She came here without any luggage; said she'd lost it in the train smash!" She sniffed inelegantly. "A good-enough tale for those that like to believe it, but I'm not one of them. My own opinion is that she never was in the train smash. Her name wasn't in the list, anyway, and they published it—a full list too."

Mrs. Seeley protested that she did not see what business it was of theirs.

"If Mr. Saxon likes to pay for her, his money's good enough for me," she said. "And they don't harm us, either of them."

Perhaps there was a shade of jealousy at the bottom of Poppy's spitefulness; perhaps it had been a bitter chagrin to her that Saxon had refused her overtures; perhaps she hated the knowledge that he was quite obviously immensely interested in Beth Granger, for at any rate she allowed her suspicions to grow, and nursed them carefully.

Elizabeth had been in the house eight days, when one night, after the so-called dinner which Mrs. Seeley was pleased to put before her guests, she followed Saxon from the dining-room, and spoke to him timidly.

"Mr. Saxon—"

He turned at once. He had fancied that during the last day or two she had been deliberately avoiding him. There was a little eager gleam in his eyes.

"Yes—"

"I want to speak to you. I—the blue eyes were raised forlornly for a moment, only to fall again—"will you please tell me how much I owe you?"

He flushed to the roots of his hair.

"How much you owe me, Miss Granger? I beg of you—"

She interrupted with gentle firmness.

"I can't stay here any longer and allow you to pay for me. I—this afternoon I went out, and—and—" She broke off as Poppy crossed the narrow hall.

She looked at them with her dark, insolent eyes, and a smile curled her red lips as she turned away.

Saxon spoke hurriedly.

"Put on your hat, Miss Granger; we'll go out."

He waited impatiently till she rejoined him. They went out together into the damp October night.

"It's impossible to talk in that house," he broke out half angrily. "And as I suppose you are bent on being disagreeable to me—"

"I want to know what I owe you. I've been here a week now, and you've paid for everything, even my clothes, and so—"

"Go on," said Saxon grimly, as she paused.

"I—I thought if I could find some work—Mrs. Seeley knows somebody who wants someone to look after her children, and—and she said—"

"She said that she thought you would do for the post? Very kind of her, I'm sure," said Saxon hardily.

There was a note in his voice that made her afraid. She tried timidly to see his face, but the night was too dark.

Unconsciously he had quickened his steps; she had almost to run to keep up with him. Then all at once he stopped. He found her hands and held them hard.

"I know of a post that would suit you far better," he said huskily, though there was a note of laughter in his voice. "I know of someone who wants someone to love him and look after him. Not much of a chap, he isn't, but he'd just adore you if ever you could bring yourself to marry him!" He drew her closer to him in the darkness till his arms encircled her.

"Marry me, dear! Be my wife!" he said.

Elizabeth stood quite still. She thought she must be dreaming. She closed her eyes, and opened them again, sure that she would find it all just imagination, but the clasp of Saxon's arms was very real, and the touch of his rough coat to which her face was pressed.

And suddenly she cried out:

"Oh! but do you love me—do you love me? You don't know anything about me—you don't know who I am even!"

"I know you are the woman I want," Saxon said firmly. "I knew it almost from the first moment I saw you. I'm not much of a chap. I haven't got much to offer you, but if you can bring yourself to care for me, ever so little, I'll do anything in the world for you—I'll work my fingers to the bone!"

There was a deep earnestness in his voice, but Elizabeth was remembering that she had once before heard just such earnestness in the voice of Claude Ridgeway, and with what disastrous results she had allowed herself to believe in it, and a little chill touched her heart.

Supposing this love was not real either?

"You don't know anything about me," she said again, with a sort of desperation. "I may be—may be—just anybody!"

Saxon laughed.

"So you may. I never thought of that. Well, I'll be magnanimous! I'll take you

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on trust if you'll take me on trust. Give me a trial, anyway, my dear, and see if you can ever bring yourself to care. I'll ask no questions. I'll be a model of patience. I don't want you to tell me anything until you really wish to—except that you love me," he added.

He felt her tremble in his arms, and with sudden, passionate impulse he stooped in the darkness and kissed her.

There was a little silence, then Elizabeth broke into frightened sobbing.

There was so much in this man's wooing that reminded her of Ridgeway. She did not know if she were happy or unhappy, she only knew that she dreaded a repetition of that other disillusionment.

Saxon held her gently. He did not speak to her, though once he raised her hand to his lips and kissed the quivering fingers, and presently she checked her sobs, and drew a little from him.

"I'm very silly, I know; but if you knew—
if you only understood—"

"I'm quite willing to wait till you want me to understand," he answered readily. "I love you, and you're going to love me some day, whether you want to or not." He took his own handkerchief and wiped her wet cheeks as if she had been a child.

That made her laugh.

"Oh, I'm not really a baby!" she protested.

"You're just a kid," he told her. "But I adore you whatever you are! And now I think I'll take you back home. You're not a bit strong yet, in spite of all this grand talk about going to work, and it's time you were in bed. Wait a moment"—he caught her hand as she was moving away from him. "There's just one thing," he said urgently. "You're not to talk any more nonsense about repaying me any money I may have lent you. When you are my wife I shall pay for everything for you, so it's only starting a little prematurely."

She tried to laugh, but the mastery of his words took her breath away.

"When you're my wife" there was something ineffably sweet in the thought.

"You hear!" he insisted, and she answered meekly:

"Yes—very well."

He kissed her hand again before he drew it through his arm, and they set off back to Mrs. Seeley's.

"I've been thinking that I'd better get rooms somewhere else," Saxon said rather awkwardly. "You won't mind? I shall be somewhere quite close, and I shall see you every day, of course. But—well, it will be more comfortable for you after this, eh?" he asked, a note of laughter in his voice.

"Yes, as long as you don't go *too* far away," she told him, with a little faint note of anxiety.

His face flushed in the darkness.

"I can promise you that," he said quickly. "And, Beth, when do you—I suppose you haven't the least idea if you'll ever—"

They were close to Mrs. Seeley's now, and Elizabeth drew her hand away.

"I think perhaps—oh, perhaps it might be—soon," she said almost in a whisper.

CHAPTER VI

Surrender

HERE was no sleep for Elizabeth that night. She lay awake with wide, shining eyes, looking into the future that had suddenly become rose-tinted and wonderful.

She could only think of the deep earnestness of Saxon's voice and its cheery mastery. Now that she was away from him, it seemed absurd that she had ever doubted his sincerity. Comparing him with Claude Ridgeway, she wondered that she had ever failed to discriminate between the two men.

Though she had only known Saxon so short a time, she felt as if she had known him all her life. Yesterday her one wish had been to wipe Otway from her life, and forget all that had ever happened there; but to-day she was hugging herself because of it, and because of the secret as yet unshared with this man, whom she was sure she could grow to love with an infinitely better and stronger affection than that which she had given to Ridgeway.

Saxon had told her he had nothing much to offer her. Her heart leapt at the thought of all that she had to offer him. Already she could feel the joy it would be to give to him to share her wealth with him.

She had not wanted it for herself, but she clung to it greedily now for his sake.

How surprised he would be when she told him who she was! Her pulses quickened at the thought.

What would he say when he learned that she was not just a little nobody, without friends or a home, dependent on him for the very bread she ate, but a rich woman?

It never occurred to Elizabeth that Saxon might not be at all pleased. She had never yet come across a man who objected to a woman because she had money and possessions; she judged everyone by her unfortunate experience with Ridgeway. He had had no use for her without her money, but Saxon had told her that he loved her and wished to marry her, believing her to be penniless.

When she fell asleep it was getting light. Through the chinks of the blind in Mrs. Seeley's best room, which Saxon had insisted that Elizabeth should have, grey streaks of dawn light were stealing. It seemed like the first step towards a new and wonderful world, she thought, as she turned her cheek to the pillow and fell dreamlessly asleep.

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Saxon moved out of Mrs. Seeley's house the following day.

Elizabeth never knew what explanation or excuse he gave to the good woman, but she seemed smiling and pleased enough, and there was a little knowing twinkle in her eyes whenever they rested on Elizabeth.

"The nicest gentleman I've ever had in my house," she declared heartily. "Not a bit of trouble, and a real gentleman."

"Has he been here long?" Elizabeth asked shyly. She was longing to know something mere about Saxon, but she did not like to ask him herself until such time when she felt that she could fully return his confidences.

"Only about a week before you came," Mrs. Seeley answered. "He hadn't been in England long, I fancy, from what he said; and between you and me—though perhaps you know already, Miss Granger—I don't believe that Saxon is his real name at all. My Poppy doesn't think so either."

"Oh!" said Elizabeth blankly.

She was conscious of a little sinking at her heart. Supposing this were true, and he, too, had something to confess to her?

But she laughed at her momentary dismay. It was pure supposition on Mrs. Seeley's part, of course; and as for Poppy—she gave a little shiver of distaste as she thought of the girl.

She felt very lonely without Saxon; she missed him at meal-times, missed his cheery smile, and the little unspoken attentions he had always been ready to give her. She did not realise that he had moved from the house because he wanted her to miss him, because he was wise enough to see that the surest way to secure her affections for himself was to remove himself from her.

The tell-tale colour rushed to her cheeks when, after a dinner that had seemed appallingly slow and tedious, she heard his voice in the hall.

There was only one other so-called "guest" in the house now besides Elizabeth—a little old maiden lady who knitted eternally, and who was conveniently deaf—so when Saxon and Elizabeth went into the drawing-room they were practically alone.

"The only unfortunate thing being that I can't kiss you," Saxon said daringly, his grey eyes searching Elizabeth's flushed face ardently.

He glanced across the room to where the little old lady was counting her stitches aloud and smiling vacantly.

"Well, have you missed me?" he demanded.

She shook her head.

"When you only went this morning? How very conceited!"

She felt a different creature now he was here—happier and younger than ever in her life before. The knowledge that he cared

for her raised her by leaps and bounds in her own estimation; the knowledge that he thought her pretty, and had once kissed her, made her feel like a princess in a fairy tale.

"But it has been horrid without you," she said, as a small concession.

She saw the little eager flame that filled his eyes.

"Well, when you find that you can't bear it any longer," he said with a lightness he was far from feeling, "you've only got to say the word, and we'll get married."

"You know what they say about marrying in haste?" she warned him.

He laughed.

"And they also say, 'Happy the wooing that's not long a-doing,'" he reminded her. He looked again towards the little old lady. "She's not very tactful, is she?" he whispered dryly.

Elizabeth's heart was beating happily, and yet, glad though she was to be with him, she was not altogether sorry that, for the moment at least, there was a restraining influence present. She was a little afraid of his headlong wooing and of his mastery, and she was not yet quite sure of herself.

But she went to the door with him to see him off, and she offered no resistance when he put his arm round her and drew her out on to the step into the darkness.

It was a clear, starry night, and the air was full of the pungent warmth that so often fills an autumn day; it took Elizabeth back with a bound to the wide gardens of Otway—to the wind in the trees and the loneliness of her life there, and she shivered a little in spite of the arm encircling her.

To have to go back to such loneliness and monotony after this! For an instant her heart failed her. Supposing it was not real, she told herself passionately! Supposing, after all, this was no more real love than that other had been. She raised her eyes to Saxon's face with shrinking dread.

"Perhaps some day you'll find that you—didn't *really*—love me—after all!" she said painfully.

He laughed; he did not take her seriously. He glanced backwards into the house and the empty hall. Then he stooped and kissed her lips as he had kissed them last night.

"I love you better than anything in all the world," he said in a whisper. "Elizabeth, when are you going to marry me and let me make you happy ever after?"

She looked away from his impassioned eyes, and up at the stars that seemed to be watching her with a friendly, encouraging twinkle, and suddenly, with a sort of desperate courage, she let go of the miserable doubts and fears to which she had been holding so fast.

"Oh," she said faintly. "If only I could be quite, quite sure that you *really* love me—"

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He gave a little triumphant exclamation. "That means—yes?" he asked. Elizabeth hid her face against his coat. "Yes," she said in a whisper.

CHAPTER VII

The Shadow of the Past

"I ALWAYS knew there was something queer about her," Poppy Seeley said bitterly when she heard that Elizabeth and Saxon were engaged.

"I was always sure that she wasn't really in that train smash. If she was, why hasn't anybody inquired for her? Not a soul in the world has ever been near her since she came here. Just a plan to get hold of Mr. Saxon, that's what it was."

Mrs. Seeley looked up from the pile of ledgers before her, and the task of trying to find out if she had made a profit out of her paying guests or not, and if so, how much. "What rubbish you do talk," she said, a shade of irritation in her good-natured voice. "She never saw Mr. Saxon till she came here—why, he didn't even know her name when he brought her in. It's just one of those things that sometimes happen," she went on placidly. "Romance, that's what it is, real romance, and there's little enough of it in the world nowadays, goodness knows," she added, sighing heavily.

Poppy scowled. She was sitting at the table pretending to read an evening paper. Her handsome, sullen face looked unusually forbidding in the lamplight. Mrs. Seeley had electric light in all the rooms occupied by her "guests," but for her own use she found oil lamps more economical.

"One must make a profit somewhere," she said helplessly, when her daughter scoffed at the idea. "And if you want to have the money for clothes, my girl, you can't expect electric light and every other comfort as well."

So Poppy bought clothes and put up with the oil lamps.

"Any woman could have caught Saxon," Poppy went on bitterly, conscious that she herself had proved unequal to the task. "He's so soft with women; big men always are. Why, if I'd cho-en—" She broke off, bending closer to the newspaper spread before her on the table.

There was a moment's breathless silence, then she broke out excitedly—

"What did I tell you! Look here—if it isn't her! What did I tell you—" She clutched her mother's arm in her excitement, dragging Mrs. Seeley round to her side of the table. "Look! look!"

She pointed to a small paragraph half way down one of the columns. She could hardly keep still for excitement; her breath was coming and going rapidly.

"Please my soul, whatever is the matter?"

asked Mrs. Seeley in mild amazement. She adjusted her glasses and read the paragraph slowly:

"£300 Reward.—The above sum will be paid to anyone who can give definite news concerning Elizabeth Neale, who left Otway Hall on the afternoon of October the 16th, and is believed to have travelled in the ill-fated express to London. All communications to be addressed, Messrs. Fastnet and Fastnet, Lincoln's Inn, W.C."

Mrs. Seeley finished reading, and looked up at her daughter for explanations.

"Well?" she said blankly.

Poppy indicated the photograph below the paragraph. A badly-produced photograph, and yet when one looked carefully its likeness to Elizabeth was unmistakable.

"Can't you see who it is?" she demanded shrilly. "Can't you see? Didn't I always say there was something mysterious about her? Didn't I warn you—" She snatched the paper up and began dancing round the room. "Three hundred pounds! It's a fortune! I can have a fur coat and those earrings I wanted—"

She never gave a thought to her mother; she was utterly and entirely selfish.

Mrs. Seeley gasped.

"But you can't prove it," she said. "How can you prove it? Miss Granger can't be Miss Neale—you're mad, my girl."

Poppy laughed.

"Am I?" she said. "Particularly sane, I call it." She caught up her hat from a chair where she had flung it down. "Anyway, I'm off to Messrs. Fastnet and Fastnet, and I'm going to tell them what I know."

She looked at her flushed reflection in the glass.

"Sly little cat! So she *did* travel on that train after all! Now I wonder what they want her for. Nothing good, I'll be bound."

"Poppy, Poppy!" said her mother reprovingly. "Don't be so uncharitable." But Poppy only laughed. She was beside herself with joy at the thought of the enormous reward. She lost herself in a dream of hats and frocks and silk petticoats; she was gone before Mrs. Seeley could ask another question or venture a protest.

As she left the house Elizabeth and Saxon were leaving it also. Saxon bade Poppy good evening, but she did not trouble to answer. She cast a little excited look at the girl beside him, and sped off down the street.

"She seems in a great hurry," Saxon said dryly. "She might have answered when I spoke to her anyway."

"I hate her," Elizabeth told him with a little shiver. "And I think she hates me too; there is something in the way she looks at me that makes my flesh creep."

Saxon laughed.

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"Well, you won't have to be there much longer," he said tenderly. "Another fortnight, and then—"

He did not finish his sentence, but a little warm thrill went to Elizabeth's heart.

She had made up her mind that to-morrow she would tell him everything about herself; that after to-morrow there should be no more secrets between them. She had already written a letter to Mr. Fastnet to tell him that she was alive and well and coming back. It gave her exquisite happiness to think of the roseate future lying in store for herself and this man who would so soon be her husband.

It began to rain, and Saxon suggested going to a restaurant for supper.

"We've never had a meal alone yet," he told her. "Do you remember the night I first took you to Mrs. Seeley's, Beth? You went to sleep in the car with your head against my shoulder!" He gave a little tender laugh of reminiscence. "I believe I began to love you from that moment; you looked such a child—"

"And you pretended that you thought I was seventeen!" she reproached him.

"And you don't look a day older," he told her fondly when presently they were sitting opposite one another in the restaurant.

It seemed a very grand restaurant to Elizabeth. Her eyes were wide with excitement and admiration, and she told Saxon in an ecstatic whisper that she had never in all her life seen such a wonderful place.

He told her that it was nothing to what he could take her to. "When we go abroad I'll show you things that will take your breath away," he promised.

He had told her before that he should take her out of England.

"I can't make a living over here," he said with a sort of chagrin. "I've been abroad so long—London stifles me, fond as I am of it. You won't be afraid to come abroad with me, Beth, away from everyone?"

She shook her head.

"You know there is nobody that I should mind leaving."

It trembled on her lips now to tell him about herself—to tell him her real name and the poor little story of her lonely life, but she hesitated with all a child's delight to keep a cherished secret to herself for yet a little while longer.

They had a happy meal together.

"I've never had such lovely food in all my life," she told him excitedly. "Before, whenever we came to London—," she broke off, a little flush dyeing her cheeks.

Saxon smiled, meeting the embarrassment of her eyes. He was quite happy; he trusted her absolutely. He was sure that whatever little secret she was keeping from him that it was of no account. She would tell him one day, when she wished to.

They smiled into one another's eyes, completely happy.

When they left the restaurant a man who had been sitting at a table on the other side of the room rose quietly, and, taking his hat and coat, followed them out into the street.

He kept some way behind them, but he never let them out of his sight. When they reached Mrs. Seeley's he stopped some distance down the road and waited.

It seemed a long time before he saw Saxon turn away from the house alone. He moved on then, and came up the road towards him.

The two men passed one another under a lamp, and for a moment Saxon's face was distinctly visible in its yellow light.

The other man gave an involuntary exclamation, and half stopped. Then he went on again rather more swiftly.

He went straight to the door of Mrs. Seeley's house. Mrs. Seeley herself was just closing it, lingering for a moment to say something over her shoulder to Elizabeth, who had crossed the hall and was standing at the foot of the stairs.

The man brushed past Mrs. Seeley without ceremony. He looked oddly flushed and excited.

He went straight across to Elizabeth, and looked down into her face with triumphant eyes.

"I was sure it must be you," he said agitatedly. "I followed you home. Where on earth have you been hiding all these weeks?"

Elizabeth looked up into his face with startled eyes, then she gave a little cry of dismay, for the man was Claude Ridgeway.

CHAPTER VIII

The End of a Dream

AFTER the first shock of recognition, it was perfectly obvious to Ridgeway's vanity that she was not pleased to see him. She drew back with a little movement of fear.

"How did you find me? How did you know I was here?" she asked stammeringly.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"I saw you in the restaurant; you were too engrossed to see me. I followed you home." He glanced at Mrs. Seeley, who was watching them curiously. "Can I speak to you alone for a moment?" he asked in an undertone.

Elizabeth knew it would be useless to refuse. She led the way into the drawing-room.

The fire had gone out, the room was cold, and she shivered as she looked at Ridgeway.

She would have given anything to avoid this meeting; she had never wished to see him again. It was a painful reminder, in

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F.176

IN SEARCH OF ROMANCE

the midst of her happiness, of all she wished to forget.

He was looking at her with unmistakable ardour in his eyes. He tried to take her hand, but she drew away from him.

"Please—please don't! What do you want to say? It's getting late—Mrs. Seeley will want to lock up."

"I've looked everywhere for you, Elizabeth," he told her rather unsteadily. "I've never had a moment's happiness since we said good-bye. Then—then we thought you'd died in that awful train smash. That was worse than anything! Mr. Fastnet was sure that was what had happened. Why didn't you let us know where you were? What in the world possessed you to run away and hide?"

She met his eyes steadily.

"I wanted you all to forget me, and I wanted to forget everything too! I hated Otway; I'd never had any happiness there. Nobody cared for me; there was nothing to keep me there."

"I cared for you," he said quickly. "You won't believe me when I say that it was as much for your sake as my own that I said we could not be married! I only knew when I thought I had lost you how much I cared. Elizabeth, is it too late? Can you ever forgive me, and take me back?" he ended, pleadingly.

She did not raise her eyes; it was all so unreal and dreamlike.

She found herself listening to him with cold criticism. He had always been a good actor, she was remembering drearily. He had said things like this to her before. She thought of the many times when he had snatched a moment with her almost before Lady Constable's eyes; the many stolen kisses which she had so cherished; the little meetings in the garden, on the stairs—anywhere, if only they could be together.

She roused herself with a sigh. That had all been in another world, surely! She could not believe that she was the same girl who had once thought that she cared for this man.

"What do you mean?" she asked him slowly. "Do you mean that you want me to give up all my money, as I said I would, and—marry you, after all?"

He took her hand, and held it fast now in spite of her efforts to release herself.

"There is nothing I want more ardently in all the world," he said. "I'll work, I'll do anything, if you'll only take me back and forgive me."

She shook her head. She was surprised how calm she felt. Even the touch of his fingers on hers did not move her in the least. The day had indeed gone when she had thrilled at this man's presence, and yet it was such a little while ago—only a month!

"It's too late," she said after a moment;

"it's much too late. I—I am engaged to be married."

She saw the angry scarlet that rushed to his face. He let her go, and fell back a step.

"Engaged to—to that man you were with to-night?"

"To Mr. Saxon—yes."

He gave a contemptuous laugh.

"Saxon! Is that the name he has given you?"

"What do you mean?" She felt her heartbeats quickening. There was some hidden sneer in his voice that filled her with nameless apprehension.

"What do you mean?" she demanded. "You do not know Mr. Saxon. How dare you speak of him like that?"

"His name is *not* Saxon, that's why," Ridgeway said roughly. "I suppose he has led you to believe that it is, but I tell you it's not. You always were a child, Elizabeth. Any story was good enough for you to believe. Saxon indeed. The man you were having supper with this evening is Constable—Nicholas Constable!"

CHAPTER IX A Tangled Skein

FOR a moment there was absolute silence in the room. Elizabeth stood staring at Ridgeway with blank eyes.

She could not realise what it was that he had just told her. His words were echoing in her ears, but they seemed senseless, meaningless. Then all at once she heard a shrill, terrified voice which she knew must be her own, though she was not in the least conscious of having spoken.

"It's not true! It's a lie! How dare you come here and say such things to me? I won't listen. Oh, I hate you! Let me go!"

He caught her wrists when she would have passed him. He held her with gentle firmness.

"Don't be a little idiot!" he said, not unkindly. "I'm sorry if I've given you a shock, but it seemed impossible that you could not really know. I was almost sure it was he when I saw you in the restaurant. We've heard rather a lot about him lately, you know. Fastnet has been advertising for him—for you both, if it comes to that. I suppose you've forgotten that if you'd been killed in that smash Constable would have inherited everything?" He laughed disagreeably. "He hadn't forgotten it, evidently! He knew well enough which side his bread was buttered, and so he pretended he did not know you. And you were completely taken in, poor kid!" There was a great pity in his voice now, but it only enraged Elizabeth. She struggled to free herself.

THE QUIVER

"Let me go! I don't believe what you say! It's all a cruel lie just to part us! I love him; we're going to be married. He loves me—he told me he loved me!"

She was sobbing and incoherent. She hardly knew what she was saying. Deep down in her heart she knew that this man's story was true, and the shock and disillusionment of it all nearly drove her mad.

Ridgeway answered soothingly.

"Of course he said he loved you. He's a wise man. He knew he had everything to gain. How did you meet him, Elizabeth? How did it all happen?"

She tried to think, to answer, but her thoughts were all confused.

"Oh, I don't know—I don't know!" she said pitifully. "I can't think. I can't believe it. Oh, if you'd just let me go!"

She broke away from him, sobbing, and, after waiting a moment in the vain hope that she would return, Ridgeway took his hat and let himself out in the street.

The unexpected meeting with Elizabeth had upset him. It was true enough that he had only realised after he had lost her how much he cared for her. It had filled him with horror to think that she had met her death in the nightmare of that terrible accident. But he was too vain a man to believe her when she said that she no longer cared for him. He was confident that if he waited patiently he could win her back again.

He might have thought differently if he had seen Elizabeth at that moment, lying face downwards on her bed, her hands beating the pillow, her whole body racked with broken sobbing.

For the second time Love had laughed at her. She had thought it hard enough to bear before, when Ridgeway had played her false, but that had been nothing compared with the anguish which was rending her now. Saxon had made himself indispensable to her; she could not imagine life without him. Her past bitter experience made her only too ready to believe the worst of him. Of course, he had all along known who she was, and had played the game in his own way, and for his own ends. His kisses and protestations had meant nothing. She was left for the second time outside the gates of her beautiful dream castle, in a cold world where nobody wanted her, or cared what became of her.

A soft knocking at the door roused her, and, raising her head, she found Mrs. Seeley standing beside the bed, looking down at her with worried eyes.

Mrs. Seeley had just had a tussle with Poppy—Poppy, who had come back from a fruitless errand to Lincoln's Inn, where she had found the office closed, and the heads of the firm inaccessible till the morning.

She had raved and ramped round the sitting-room.

"Just my luck! Somebody else will get there first now, and I shall lose the money." She had vented her anger on her mother, till in sheer desperation Mrs. Seeley had been forced to go to bed to escape her. It was as she was passing Elizabeth's door that she heard the passionate sobbing that had brought her into the room.

She sat down beside the girl and took her hand.

"Oh! dearie, dearie, whatever is the matter?" she asked in dismay. "You'll be ill if you cry like that. If it's anything to do with Mr. Saxon—there, all lovers quarrel sometimes! And he's so fond of you, he'll be round first thing in the morning to say he's sorry, and make it up. Oh, don't cry!"

Elizabeth tried to check her sobs. She kept her face hidden in the pillow.

"It's all right; I'm better now," she said presently. She raised herself, and looked at the kind woman's worried face with teardimmed eyes.

"You won't—won't tell anyone?" she asked in a shamed whisper.

Mrs. Seeley bent and kissed her warmly.

She had a soft corner in her heart for Elizabeth, though she would have been afraid to let Poppy know it.

"As if I should think of telling anyone!" she said. "And it will be all right in the morning—you see if it isn't."

But when she came to Elizabeth's door in the morning there was no answer to her knock, and when she opened it, with a shade of fear at her heart, the room was empty, and Elizabeth had gone.

There was a little note pinned to the cushion on the dressing-table—a badly written little note which just said good-bye, and told Mrs. Seeley not to worry.

"I'll write to you soon," so it went on, "and try to explain everything. Thank you very much for all your kindness, but I shall never come back."

There was no letter for Saxon, no mention of him.

Mrs. Seeley screamed, and rushed in to Poppy, and a nice scene followed.

Poppy was almost hysterical in her anger.

"It's all your fault. You ought to have prevented her going," she accused her mother. "Now we shan't ever find her again, and I shall never get that money." She burst into a storm of furious weeping.

But later on, when she had composed herself sufficiently to dress and take an omnibus to Lincoln's Inn again, she found she was granted an immediate interview with Mr. Fastnet.

He listened smilingly to what she had to say, and nodded his head once or twice, but when she would have gone on into elaborate explanations, he interrupted her.

"I am much obliged to you for coming here, Miss—er—Seeley," he said blandly,

IN SEARCH OF ROMANCE

"and I will see that you are suitably rewarded for your trouble. But Miss Elizabeth Neale is here now. She came to my office half an hour ago."

He bowed her out smilingly, and went back to the inner room, where Elizabeth sat by the fire.

"Your friend Miss Seeley has just been here," he said gently. "You were quite right when you said that you were sure she did not like you." He laughed suddenly. "I really believe she thought that we wanted you for some crime." He laid a hand on Elizabeth's shoulder. "And now go on—tell me the rest of the story. You had got so far as the night of the train smash, when this Mr. Saxon took you to Mrs. Seeley's."

"Yes"—Elizabeth turned her face away—"I hadn't any money, but I stayed on. I wasn't well at first, and then—then"—her voice faltered—"Mr. Saxon wanted me to stay, so—so he paid for me. He was very kind, and I thought—"

"Yes," he encouraged gently, as she paused.

"I thought I could get some work to do. I never meant to go back to Otway. I hated it—I'd had enough of it all. I didn't want the money, or anything to do with it."

"So you let us think that you had been killed in that accident? I was so sure you were on the train! Dr. Granger was on it too, but he didn't get hurt, and he told me that he was almost certain he saw you on the platform at Otway."

Elizabeth nodded.

"Yes, and I saw him," she said faintly. It seemed a long cry back to that evening, and the beginning of her impulsive search for romance.

She went on painfully:

"After a little while I—I got engaged to Mr. Saxon." She raised her sad eyes to Mr. Fastnet's face. "I thought, I *really* thought, that he was genuine—that he really *cared*! He knew nothing about me, except that I had no money or friends. He was so kind, but it wasn't real—it wasn't any more real than Claude Ridgeway's pretence," she went on with rising passion. "Last night, after we had had supper together, Mr. Ridgeway followed me home."

"Ridgeway!"

"Yes. He had seen us in the restaurant, and he followed me, and he asked me to forgive him, and take him back."

"Yes—go on!" Mr. Fastnet's voice was grim. "Go on!" he said again very quietly.

"Well, I wouldn't. I told him that I was engaged to be married to Mr. Saxon, and he laughed, and he said—he told me that—that his name wasn't really Saxon at all, but—but—" her voice sank to almost a whisper—"he said it was Nicholas Constable," she added broken-heartedly.

There was unbroken silence. Mr. Fastnet was sitting a little forward in his chair, staring at Elizabeth with incredulous eyes.

"Nicholas Constable!" he said blankly. "But, my dear child, of course you don't believe this absurd story?" he asked sharply. "Of course you know Ridgeway well enough to know that anything he says—"

She looked up with a ray of hope.

"You mean that it isn't true?" she asked dully. "Oh, if I could only believe that!"

Mr. Fastnet drew his chair a little closer to hers.

"Ridgeway seems to have told you a great deal," he said quietly. "But I suppose he didn't by any wonderful chance mention that there had been another will found among Lady Constable's papers—a later will than the one I read that day down at Otway? A later will by which everything is left to Nicholas except the sum of ten thousand pounds, which is to be yours—*unconditionally*? He never told you *that*, by any wonderful chance, did he?"

Elizabeth tried to speak, but could find no words.

"So you see what his cry for forgiveness and broken repentance was worth," Mr. Fastnet went on cynically. "And as for this—this absurd story about your friend Saxon and Nicholas Constable being one and the same man—my dear child, I believe it's a tissue of lies."

Elizabeth did not answer. She was afraid to hope, afraid to catch at the straw that had been offered to her to save her from drowning in the sea of her despair.

"Anyway, we can soon prove, or disprove, it," the lawyer went on briskly. "But beforehand, I should like to hear from you what you intended to do when you came here this morning."

His eyes softened as they looked at her. She was such a child in spite of her five-and-twenty years—so helpless, so utterly unsuited to battle with the world.

She answered hesitatingly.

"I thought after all I would—would take the money, and go back to Otway, and—and try and make the best of it." There was a sort of puzzled hurt in her voice. "If—if I had married Mr. Saxon, I meant to go back," she told him. "I was glad to have had all the money—for him."

"And now you have only got ten thousand pounds, and without any conditions attached," said Mr. Fastnet dryly. "You can marry Ridgeway if you choose—you know that?"

She flushed up to her blue eyes.

"You mean that is why he wanted me to forgive him?"

"I certainly *do* mean that."

She shivered.

"Oh, I don't want to marry anyone—ever!" she said.

Mr. Fastnet rose.

THE QUIVER

"We won't discuss that until we have seen Saxon," he said briskly. "Will you come with me, or would you rather stay here?" "I would rather come with you."

"Very well." Mr. Fastnet sent for a taxi, and he and Elizabeth drove away together. It was a very silent drive, and neither of them spoke at all till they had almost reached the address Elizabeth had given him, when Mr. Fastnet said:

"You are thinking that if Saxon is Constable, as you have been told, he has deliberately deceived you, *knowing* who you were?"

"Yes."

"For the sake of the money which he believes you are to inherit?"

"Yes."

"I see. Well, here we are." He gave her his hand, and they went together into the unpretentious hotel to which Saxon had moved after he left Mrs. Seeley's.

Elizabeth was shaking like a leaf. She shrank behind Mr. Fastnet as they waited in one of the musty rooms for Saxon to come to them. It was some minutes before they heard his step outside.

He came into the room with Mr. Fastnet's card in his hand. He looked at him inquiringly. He did not at first see Elizabeth's little figure in the gloomy room.

Mr. Fastnet took a step forward. There was a moment's silence then. "You don't remember me?" he said quietly.

Saxon shook his head, and glanced again at the card he held.

"No. I—"

"I am Fastnet," the lawyer said. "You once knew me, years ago, as solicitor to your aunt, Lady Constable. I know you very well—you are Nicholas Constable."

A sudden flush dyed the young man's face; he held out his hand.

"By Jove! I—" Then he saw Elizabeth, and he gave a stifled exclamation. "Beth!"

He seemed to understand now that something was wrong. He looked from one to the other inquiringly.

"What is the matter? Is anything the matter? I—Beth!"

She crossed the room to where he stood. Mr. Fastnet never forgot the strained look on her white face as she raised it to Constable's, or the note of anguish in her voice as she asked him a broken question:

"Did you—did you know—that my name wasn't really—what I told you it was?"

"Yes." There was no hesitation in the reply.

"And did you—did you know who I really was? That I was really Elizabeth Neale?"

He seemed to understand now. A curious look flashed over his face. He caught her hand in both his.

"I did—yes, I did; but not till last night, Beth. Good gracious, you don't think—

you're not trying to tell me that you think I—"

She dragged her hand free of him; she went back to Mr. Fastnet.

"Oh, take me away—take me away!" she said faintly. "I never want to see him again."

Saxon put his back to the door.

"This has got to be explained," he said grimly. He was very pale, but there was a light of determination in his eyes. "I have my own explanation to offer when I have heard yours, and I am sorry, but you can't go, either of you, till this matter has been cleared up."

Mr. Fastnet shrugged his shoulders.

"It's all very extraordinary," he said irritably. He did not like this unofficial way of doing things. "I've been cabling all over the world for you, Nicholas, and apparently you've been here in London all the time."

"No, only during the last six weeks," said Nicholas curtly.

"Very well, then, during the last six weeks. Perhaps you will be good enough to tell me why you allowed Lady Constable to believe you to be dead all these years, and what brought you home?"

"My death was reported—I saw it myself in an English paper—and as there was nobody over here for whom I cared two straws, I never troubled to contradict the report. I had already changed my name, and was known as Saxon." He looked at Elizabeth, and quickly away again: "I came home, as most men come home sooner or later, when they have been abroad for years as I had. I meant to go down to Otway, but then I heard my aunt was dead, so I changed my mind. I thought that if I turned up then people would say I had come for what I could get. She quarrelled with me, as you know, years ago. I expected nothing from her—I want nothing from her. But this is all beside the point. And with regard to Miss Neale"—his voice faltered for a moment—"I had no more idea than the dead who she was. She told me her name was Granger. I had never heard of Elizabeth Neale till last night. I certainly thought it strange that she seemed to have no friends, but it was no business of mine, and though I rather suspected, I never knew until last night, when that advertisement appeared in the evening papers, that Granger was not her real name. And even now—" He looked again at Beth, and was struck by something in her attitude. He took a quick stride towards her.

"Beth, for goodness' sake, what is the meaning of all this? What have I done? I meant to tell you the truth about myself before we were married! What can it matter to you if my name is Saxon or Constable? It's the only thing I have ever concealed from you—I swear it is! I trusted



"Did you know that my name wasn't
really—what I told you it was?"

Drawn by
Norah Schiegel.

THE QUIVER

you; I never asked you a single question; surely you—”

She raised her eyes to his white face.

“You mean that you didn’t know that Lady Constable had left all her money to me?” she asked.

He stared at her, then he laughed.

“To you! My aunt! I never had the slightest idea that you even knew her.” He looked frankly amazed.

Mr. Fastnet stepped forward.

“I think you had better let me explain,” he said stiffly. “We only seem to be getting deeper into the tangle. It’s just this, Nicholas”—and he proceeded to outline the whole story.

Young Constable listened with an immovable face. He did not once look in Elizabeth’s direction until Mr. Fastnet had finished. Then he went over to where she stood, he put his hands on her shoulders, and turned her round to him almost roughly.

“And you believed that I knew all this, and just wanted to marry you for the money!” he asked in an odd voice.

“I did—yes, I did,” said Elizabeth voicelessly. “But now—oh, now—” Nicholas turned away; he dragged his hand free of hers when she tried to hold it.

“Well, that *finishes* it,” he said in a voice of flint. He looked at Mr. Fastnet. “I must ask you to excuse me now,” he said stiffly. “Some other time, if you wish to see me—”

“But, my dear boy, you can’t go like this. It’s all just a most unfortunate misunderstanding which can surely soon be put right. Surely everything is turning out in the most approved ‘happy-ending’ style? Surely—” He looked from one to the other, but he could not see Elizabeth’s face, and young Constable’s looked as if it had been cut in marble.

There was a tragic silence.

“There is nothing more to be said,” Constable said stiffly. “And if you will excuse me—” He bowed to Elizabeth, and walked out of the room.

For a moment neither of them moved, then Mr. Fastnet touched the girl’s arm.

“Come, my dear,” he said kindly. “Don’t look like that. He is angry now, but it will be all right soon; he will be sorry, and come back, and it will all be forgotten and forgiven.”

Elizabeth shook her head. She was white to the lips.

“No,” she said lifelessly, “he won’t forgive me—ever! I know! I can’t expect it!”

CHAPTER X Unravelled

IT was a nine days’ wonder down at Otway over the romantic reappearance of Elizabeth Neale, and many and varied were the stories with which her

name was coupled when it became known that she had been hiding in London all the time.

Some people declared that she had run away with Claude Ridgeway; others said that she had been held captive by the indignant relatives of Lady Constable. The whole countryside buzzed with the weirdest stories, and the excitement rose to a crescendo of feverishness when Nicholas Constable appeared at Otway Hall.

Those people who had known him ten years before flocked to renew his acquaintance; mothers with marriageable daughters preened themselves and hoped for the best. Invitations were showered upon him. Everybody said it was a good thing there was to be a master at the Hall instead of “Little Miss Nobody,” as they had privately dubbed Elizabeth.

Some even went so far as to credit her with having influenced Lady Constable to make the first will. Poor Elizabeth! who could never have influenced anyone to do anything, unless one excepted Nicholas Constable.

But even he had surrounded himself now with a wall of stubborn pride which, for the time being at all events, was choking his love. It had cut him to the heart that Elizabeth should have believed him capable of such deception; he cared nothing for the money which had suddenly been thrust upon him; he thought Otway Hall a most depressing spot; he wondered how he had even liked being there years ago. He told Mr. Fastnet that nothing on earth would induce him to make it his home.

“Sell the place as soon as you like,” he said. “I shall clear off abroad as soon as everything is settled.”

Mr. Fastnet pretended to agree, but he had no smallest intention of selling the estate which he had administered for so many years. He still cherished a hope that Elizabeth and Nicholas would come to an understanding. Though he called Nicholas foolish and pig-headed, he secretly rather admired his pride; it was such a contrast to Claude Ridgeway.

For the present Elizabeth was living in Mr. Fastnet’s house. His wife, a motherly woman with no children of her own, had taken to the girl instantly, and Elizabeth was almost happy for the first time in her life.

She did her best not to think of Nicholas, but he was never really out of her thoughts. All day and night she was haunted with remorse for what she had done; it tortured her to remember how well and whole-heartedly he had loved her.

She knew now without shadow of doubt that he had not had the least suspicion with regard to her identity when he asked her to be his wife; she knew that he would have taken her to his heart and loved her



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IN SEARCH OF ROMANCE

if she had not had a shilling in the world, or a friend.

At times she tried to find excuses for herself; tried to believe that anyone who had had her bitter experience with Ridgeway would have acted the second time as she had acted. She knew so little of the world, and the ways of men; was it to be marvelled at that she had doubted?

At other times she reproached herself passionately. Where had her instinct been that she had not been able to distinguish the false from the true? When she went to sleep at night it was only to dream of Nicholas, and the happiness she had lost, and wake with the tears wet on her cheeks.

But she never spoke of him, though once or twice Mrs. Fastnet had gently tried to lead her to do so. Her hurt was too deep to be talked about, even to someone who understood and sympathised; she locked it up in her own heart, and grieved silently.

She had never seen Constable since that morning at the hotel, when he walked out of the room. He had kept away from Otway during the few days that she stayed there, and if ever he went to see Mr. Fastnet, it was always at the office, never at the house.

She heard no more of Ridgeway, and wished to hear nothing; she hated him for the mischief he had caused, and the sorrow he had brought her.

"I'm not meant to have any real happiness, that's what it is," she told herself hopefully. "I suppose some people are born like that."

"I never saw a child with such sad eyes," Mrs. Fastnet told her husband one evening. "Can't *anything* be done, dear? She's just breaking her heart for Nicholas."

"I'm afraid he isn't breaking his heart for her," Mr. Fastnet answered grimly. "I hear that he's got a crowd of people at Otway Hall—spongers, most of them, I dare say, who just hope to get something out of him. He ran up to town for a few hours yesterday, and called in to see me. He seems to be getting through a rare lot of money." He shrugged his shoulders. "No, I'm afraid there's nothing to be done. He's proud, and as obstinate as a mule; I rather admire him for it all the same," he added unwillingly.

Mrs. Fastnet thought it was all much ado about nothing, and said so rather tartly.

"Life's too short to allow such misunderstandings to continue," she said. "Here's Elizabeth wasting away to a shadow."

It worried her considerably to see the girl's pallor and dispiritedness. She was always plotting schemes by which she could bring her and Nicholas Constable together. In imagination she pictured accidents and rescues from burning houses, and all manner of romantic things, wherein Nicholas was to play the hero, and Elizabeth the injured heroine.

"I don't believe in romance," Elizabeth said once, when Mrs. Fastnet said something about it to her. "I used to, but I don't now. Lady Constable always said I should find out what a mistake I made to believe in it, and she was right."

"She was a sour, disagreeable old woman who didn't believe in anything but spite," Mrs. Fastnet declared irascibly. "Please don't quote anything *she* said to me! My husband will tell you what I always thought about Lady Constable."

Elizabeth smiled faintly.

"I think perhaps she *meant* to be kind," she said.

"She never meant to be anything of the sort," Mrs. Fastnet declared with energy. "She hadn't a single redeeming grace that I could ever discover. However, we won't discuss her, my dear; it makes me angry."

But she was not content to let the subject drop. She was always talking about Nicholas to her husband.

"Surely you could do something to put matters right?" she insisted with all a woman's determination. "Ask Nicholas to call at the office, and Elizabeth and I will drop in by accident."

But there was nothing romantic in Mr. Fastnet's composition, and he did not fancy turning his office into a lovers' trysting place. He answered testily that it never paid to meddle with other people's love affairs.

"Besides," he added, "Nicholas is going abroad. I believe he has made all his arrangements, only he won't admit it. He's got the roving spirit, and he'll never settle down in England, so the sooner he goes the better. After all, there are plenty of other men in the world, my dear, and for a girl with ten thousand pounds, as Elizabeth has, there are always plenty of chances."

"Which she will never look at," Mrs. Fastnet maintained. "She's not that sort. It will be Nicholas or nobody, you see."

"Nobody then, I am afraid," Mr. Fastnet commented dryly. He was rather tired of the discussion.

But all the same, it came as a decided shock to him when one morning he got a letter from Nicholas announcing his determination to leave England in a week's time.

"I made all my plans some time ago, as I dare say you guessed," he wrote. "I'm sick of England, and Otway Hall. I can't settle down."

Mr. Fastnet read the letter, and passed it across to his wife with a warning glance at Elizabeth.

"The sooner the boy goes, the sooner she'll forget him," was the thought with which he comforted himself. He had got very fond of Elizabeth since she came to live in his house, and he was not at all anxious to part with her, either to Nicholas or any other man.

THE QUIVER

But Mrs. Fastnet did not share the same view, and as soon as she had seen her husband off to his office, she sought Elizabeth out and told her.

The girl took it very quietly. She did not change colour at all; she just said:

"I am not surprised; he always said that he could not stay in England," and went back to the book she was reading.

Mrs. Fastnet was disappointed. She did not know quite what she had expected, but at any rate she had expected something different from this. She left the room rather offendedly, shutting the door behind her.

And then Elizabeth laid down her book; she sat quite still with her eyes closed, and her head resting against the cushions of the chair.

It had come at last, this news she had been dreading! Nicholas was going away, and she would never see him again.

The search for romance which she had begun so eagerly and hopefully was to end in tame bitterness and disappointment after all. For the rest of her life there would be nothing to look forward to, nothing to hope for.

Almost she wished herself back in the old days, beneath the watchful eyes of Lady Constable; then at least she had not known the suffering love entailed. If life had been dull, it had at least been without pain, and surely anything was better than this restless longing that never left her.

And then suddenly a wild thought came into her mind. She would go down to Otway; she would see him once again whatever happened; she would see him once more—for the last time.

She knew that Mrs. Fastnet was going out after lunch, and she waited in an agony of impatience till the door had closed behind her, then she flew up to her room and dressed.

She chose one of the pretty new hats Mrs. Fastnet had insisted on her buying, she put on her prettiest gown.

Nicholas had never seen her in anything but the most ordinary of clothes, she knew, and though she did not mean him to see her, if it could be avoided, there was a very real hope in her heart that perhaps fate, that had so unkindly spoilt her happiness so far, might relent and show her the sunshine once again.

But as soon as the train started she repented her rashness. She was afraid of what might happen, afraid of whom she might meet. She would have given a great deal had it been possible to go back. When she found herself on the platform at Otway Station, she would even then have gone straight back to London had there been a train, but there was none for more than an hour.

She walked out of the station and down the familiar road that led to Otway Hall.

Memories came crowding back to her as she walked; every inch of the way reminded her of the years she had spent with Lady Constable. There had been so many dull drives, and duller walks. She quickened her steps a little as if to escape them all.

Dr. Granger passed her in his dogcart; she kept her head lowered so that he should not recognise her. She remembered how he had almost quarrelled with Lady Constable because he would not give up his trap for a car; Lady Constable had protested that a car looked better. She had been bitterly angry because he had not at once sold his brown cob and carried out her desire.

It was the only one instance in which Elizabeth could ever remember that he had crossed her wishes. She wondered what made her think of it now.

A turn in the road brought Otway Hall in sight. There was something different about the fine old face of the house already, she thought, and then laughed at herself for thinking so. How could it be different? She supposed the knowledge that Lady Constable's grim presence was removed from it had prompted the imagination. She walked more slowly now; she was afraid at every step of meeting one of the servants and of being recognised.

Supposing Nicholas himself were to come along? She wondered what she would do. She stood still and looked nervously up and down the road.

Then she heard the sudden tap, tap of horses' feet, and before she could run back, or get out of the way, Nicholas himself had cantered out of the wide gates leading to the house and was coming towards her.

For a moment Elizabeth felt as if every drop of blood in her body rushed to her heart; she was cold from head to foot with a sudden frozen jealousy, for young Constable was not alone; there was a girl with him, mounted on a grey mare—a pretty girl who was looking up into his face as they rode side by side, and saying something to him in a clear, laughing voice.

Elizabeth shrank back against the hedge. There was a voiceless prayer in her heart that they would not see her; but the next instant she was telling herself bitterly that she need not have feared; they were too engrossed in one another to be aware of her presence, and they cantered on down the road and were lost to sight.

Elizabeth waited till she could no longer hear the clop-clop of the horses' feet, then she dragged herself together and turned blindly back to the station.

She had been a fool to come! What had she hoped for? she asked herself drearily. Fortune had only dealt her another blow. Why had she ever been so pitifully sanguine as to hope for anything better?

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IN SEARCH OF ROMANCE

She never knew how she got back to the station. She was cold and tired, and her head ached miserably.

Well, she had had her wish, and she had seen him; and her heart had found him more dear than ever before as he cantered past her without turning his head.

She went into the little waiting-room and stood by the fire shivering with hurt and jealousy.

He could not really have cared for her, she was thinking; if he had, would he let pride stand between them all this long while? Could he look so careless and smiling in the company of some woman who was not herself?

Where were they now? she wondered. How bitterly she envied that girl who was with him. She lost herself in jealous introspection.

The train came in, puffing and snorting, and she roused herself with an effort and took her seat. She had the carriage to herself just as she had done on that other faraway day when she had started in her search for the romance which Lady Constable had warned her that she would never find.

She knew it for herself now; knew that her last hope had been trampled in the dust by the sight of Nicholas Constable riding with that girl.

She closed her eyes to keep back the tears which would rise, and so she never saw a man who came hurriedly on to the platform and began to walk the length of the train, peering anxiously into the window of each carriage as he passed.

When he saw Elizabeth he stopped, and drew a great sigh of relief; the train had begun to move slowly as he wrenched open the door of the carriage.

Elizabeth opened her eyes with a start as she heard him enter, then she turned quite white to her very lips and sat up with a stifled cry.

"I suppose you thought I didn't see you?" Constable said.

He was breathless and flushed; he took off the cap he wore and ran agitated fingers through his thick hair.

The little gesture reminded Elizabeth acutely of the first night she ever saw him, when he saved her from the burning wreckage of the train.

She sat staring at him helplessly.

"I saw you on the road," he said again. "I rode back as soon as I could get rid of that girl . . ." He sat down opposite

Elizabeth and looked at her with hungry eyes. "Well?" he said. "Why have you come back to Otway?"

She tried to speak, tried to find some ready excuse, but no words would come; and suddenly Constable stooped forward and took her in his arms.

"I can't stand it any longer," he said hoarsely. "I should have come to fetch you to-morrow, anyway, if this hadn't happened."

She lifted her face to speak, and he closed her lips with a kiss.

"You forgive me?" he asked.

"You put your pride before me," she told him tremulously.

"And you put yours before your trust in me," he said. His arm tightened its grip of her. "Now we're quits, and I'll say I'm sorry if you will. Oh! my dear, we're not going to be two such idiots as to spoil all our lives for anything so silly as pride, are we?"

She hid her face against his coat.

"I came down to-day because I heard you were going away and because I wanted to see you again," she told him.

"And I," said Constable guiltily, "wrote and told old Fastnet that I was going, because I hoped he would tell *you*, and that then you would meet me half-way."

"More than half-way," she said sadly. "Oh, you won't ever think less of me because I . . ."

He put a hand over her lips.

"I refuse to listen. Such things are never to be said again between us . . ."

The train was moving swiftly now.

"I look a nice object to go to London," he said presently. He glanced down ruefully at his riding breeches and top-boots.

Elizabeth looked at him with worshipful eyes.

"You look—beautiful!" she said shyly.

He turned her face and kissed it.

"You—kid!" he said with a break in his voice.

She leaned back contentedly with a little happy sigh.

"It's like a journey to fairyland," she said softly.

"Or a journey in search of romance, as you once told me, eh?" he asked fondly.

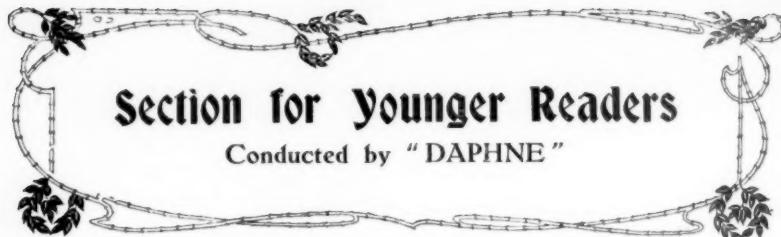
"Shall we call it that?"

But Elizabeth shook her head.

"Not in *search of it*," she said, "because really I found it long ago when I first met you."

THE END





Section for Younger Readers

Conducted by "DAPHNE"

TEROR BY NIGHT

I HAVE just finished reading your essays on "Terror by Night," and if I do not suffer seriously from nightmare for the next few weeks, it will not be the fault of the readers who entered for this competition! Really, I am afraid you must all be in the habit of indulging in the most injudicious suppers before going to bed, judging by the fearful and horrible dreams you all have to recount. Or is it, as one competitor suggests, due to the exciting dramas pictured on the films?

Night Fears

Whatever may be the cause of it, it is certain that this dread of the dark is common to most of us. There is a theory, you know, which was mentioned by one or two competitors, that this dread is a survival of a primitive instinct in the human race. Before the days of civilisation the night time was indeed a time of peril and dread to our forefathers—danger and death lurked in every moving shadow—no man might know as he watched the daylight die whether he would live to see it dawn again. It is no wonder that primitive man's religion was the worship of the sun!

Result of the Competition

A great many people wrote about Zeppelin raids, and one or two competitors sent in really charming little stories with the subject of the essay as the title. Zeppelin raids, however, are rather too easy a way out of the difficulty, and stories were not asked for this time, so those competitors who skirted round the matter in this way were put out of the running. BETTY S. MAXWELL began her essay well, but although it showed a considerable amount of origin-

ality, it was very carelessly put together, and the badly constructed sentences sent it down to second place. The prize of Half-a-Guinea offered by the Editor is awarded to RHODA BENNETT, but owing to lack of space I regret being unable to print her essay.

The Honours List

The work of the following competitors is very highly commended:

Betty S. Maxwell, Winifred Coleman, Hilda M. Walker, Margaret Ellison, Sheila Coast, Violet Lasbrey, Winifred Mary Yates, Frances N. M. Tall, Perronelle Chevalier, D. A. Sutherst, Dorothy Powell, Kathie McLean, Gwendolen Leijonhufvud, Katherine M. Prime, Kathleen A. Eavis, David K. Caldwell, Olive Chambré Budd, Jessie Stewart, Mabel M. Penn.

"My Academy Picture" Competition

There was a large number of entries for this competition, so I suppose the subject was popular; but I am sorry to say that the majority of the drawings sent in did not reach a very high level of attainment. The prize of Half-a-Guinea goes to HUBERT S. T. DEANE, aged 15, for a drawing which, both for originality of design and skill in execution, easily takes the first place.

The following competitors are highly commended:

Avril Anderson, Christian E. Cameron, Jack Paton, Christian Milne, Eric Cooper, Katherine M. Prime, M. Singleton, Dora Small.

A Recitation Competition

This month the literary prize of Five Shillings will be given for the best verses suitable for recitation sent in to this office by February 20th. Verses must not be more than fifty lines long. Any subject may be chosen so long as the poem is suitable for recitation—by which I mean that it must contain some form of narrative,

SEE IF THE CHILD'S TONGUE IS COATED.

Mother, Don't Hesitate! If your Child is Cross, Feverish, Constipated, give "California Syrup of Figs."

Look at your child's tongue, mother! If coated, it is a sure sign that the little one's stomach, liver and bowels need a gentle, thorough cleansing at once.

When peevish, cross, listless, pale, unable to sleep, doesn't eat or act naturally; or if it is feverish, with a disordered stomach and tainted breath, or has stomach-ache, sore throat, diarrhoea, or the "stiffness" caused by a cold, give a tea-spoonful of "California Syrup of Figs" and in a few hours all the foul, constipated waste-matter, undigested food and sour bile gently move out of its little bowels without griping, and you have a healthy, playful child again.

You needn't coax sick children to take this harmless "fruit laxative"; they love its delicious taste, and it always makes them feel splendid.

Ask your chemist for a bottle of "California Syrup of Figs," which has directions for babies, children of all ages and for grown-ups plainly on the bottle. To be sure you get the genuine, look and see that it is made by "California Fig Syrup Company." Refuse any other kind with contempt. All leading chemists sell "California Syrup of Figs," $1/3$ and $2/3$ per bottle.



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"St. Jacobs Oil" has cured millions of sufferers from rheumatism in the last half century, and is just as good for sciatica, neuralgia, lumbago, back-ache and sprains.

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Danderine is to the hair what fresh showers of rain and sunshine are to vegetation. It goes right to the roots, invigorates and strengthens them. Its exhilarating, stimulating and life-producing properties cause the hair to grow long, strong and beautiful.

You can surely have pretty, charming, lustrous hair, and lots of it, if you will just get a bottle of Knowlton's Danderine, and try it as directed. Sold by all chemists and stores at $1/4$ and $2/3$.

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SECTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

whether of a humorous character or otherwise. So please *don't* overwhelm me with love-songs or verses on Spring—you'll only be disqualified if you do!

An Illustration for Cinderella

I suppose you all know the story of Cinderella? Of course you do, though—nobody's education was ever complete that did not include an acquaintance with that nursery classic. Well, I want you to draw an illustration for this well-known story, either in colour or in black-and-white—just as you prefer. You may take any episode you like—Cinderella in her rags, Cinderella and the fairy godmother—I don't mind what the subject of the picture is so long as it is a good illustration to the story. The Editor is giving a prize of Half-a-Guinea for the best drawing sent in.

Rules for Competitors

1. All work must be original, and must be certified as such by the competitor. In the case of literary competitions, work must be written upon one side of the paper only.
2. The competitor's name, age, and address must be clearly written upon each entry—not enclosed on a separate piece of paper. All loose pages must be pinned together.
3. No entry can be returned unless accompanied by a fully-stamped and directed envelope, large enough to contain it. Stamps unaccompanied by envelopes are insufficient.
4. All entries must be received at this office by February 20th, 1918. They should be addressed "Competitions," THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

The Correspondence Column Again

I believe our Correspondence Column is going to be successful. Judging from the number of notices for insertion this month,

it really does supply a long-felt want. I am especially glad that so many soldiers have answered the advertisements. We all want to do our best for the brave men who are fighting for us; and if we can help any of the lonely ones by writing to them, I am sure there is not one of us who would not be glad to do so. Only, of course, we must know about them before we can send them letters, so if any lonely soldier or

sailor who reads these words feels that he would like to insert an advertisement for pen-friends, I hope he will not hesitate to write to me. There is nothing to pay, and, by the way, the rule of enclosing stamped envelopes for letters that are to be forwarded does not apply to men serving overseas. I mention this because so many soldiers have written to me from abroad sending letters to be forwarded, and have apologised for not being able to comply with this rule.

Here is the new list of readers wanting friends :

Doreen (aged 18½), who lives in a quiet country place in Scotland and works in an office, would like correspondents, Home or foreign.

Laura Doone would like a letter-friend about 17 years of age. Advertiser is interested in English literature, especially in poetry, and hopes to take the Senior Cambridge next year.

A lady would like to correspond with a refined member of the opposite sex, not under 40. She is fond of reading, motoring, French, and takes a keen interest in life and in the war. Please reply to *Hiromedelle*.

A QUIVER reader would like a pen-friend. She lives in a quiet country place in Scotland, and has very few correspondents. Her age is 15, and she is very fond of music. Reply to *Rosemary*.

Eldorado (aged 14) would like a correspondent of her own age, either home or abroad. She is fond of reading and writing stories, is passionately fond of music, and would like to play or listen to it all day long.



Prize Winning Drawing.

By Hubert S. T. Deane.

17 years of age. Advertiser is interested in English literature, especially in poetry, and hopes to take the Senior Cambridge next year.

A lady would like to correspond with a refined member of the opposite sex, not under 40. She is fond of reading, motoring, French, and takes a keen interest in life and in the war. Please reply to *Hiromedelle*.

A QUIVER reader would like a pen-friend. She lives in a quiet country place in Scotland, and has very few correspondents. Her age is 15, and she is very fond of music. Reply to *Rosemary*.

THE QUIVER

Dora Small wants to correspond with an American or a Canadian girl of about her own age (15). She would prefer one who lives in a large town, and who has never been to England.

Wanted—a schoolgirl to correspond with a girl of 12. Advertiser is fond of Nature Study, poetry, and books, and is very keen on games, especially hockey. Please write to *Mirth*.

A girl (aged 20) living in London, would like a correspondent who lives in the country. *Miranda*.

Harem-Scararem (aged 21), awfully fond of reading, music, and French, will be delighted to have pen-friends of similar tastes. She is also very fond of outdoor games.

Marion Brooks would like to correspond with someone living abroad—not in India, Ceylon, Australia, or South Africa—who would be willing to exchange stamps with her.

Ellen L. Ewings (aged 23), employed by a large firm in London, would very much like some pen friends. She would not much mind what they wrote about as her interests are pretty general.

A business girl, fond of books, music, nature, no 'ologies, would like to correspond with a refined member of the opposite sex with similar tastes, with a view to friendship. Home or abroad. Write to *Musical*.

White Heather (aged 17½) would like a pen-friend of about the same age or older. She is very fond of all outdoor games, nature-study, music, and reading. She has just left a large public school, and would especially like to hear from schoolgirls.

Wanted by an Irish girl—someone who will correspond.—*Tipperary*.

Pearl (aged 17) would like to correspond with a sailor or soldier from overseas. Australian preferred. All letters answered, however late they are.

Wanted—a correspondent, boy or girl. Advertiser is very fond of reading; aged 16. Please write to *Lonely Schoolgirl*.

Westralia wants to write to a wounded soldier, or a lonely or colonial soldier serving abroad. She collects stamps, and is fond of books, travel, and outdoor life.

A reader (aged 24) would like to write to an invalid soldier who is fond of reading and music, and who would appreciate letters and books occasionally. Please reply to *G. S.*

Pensee (aged 22), fond of reading and writing, and passionately fond of music, wants letter-friends.

Wanted—a lonely person, over 22, for a letter-friend. *Marjorie*.

M. A., who is working in a bank, wishes to correspond with anyone who would write amusing letters.

Tristram (aged 25) wants correspondents—not girls. He collects stamps, loathes poetry, but likes a good novel, is keenly interested in art, and can draw a bit himself. At present he is working in a bank and is rather lonely.

H. S. (aged 23) would like to write to a wounded soldier in hospital. One fond of music preferred, but advertiser would be glad to write to anybody who was lonely and who would like an occasional letter to cheer him up.

Would any lonely soldier, sailor, or girl-reader care to write to one who gets very few letters? Advertiser is 20 years of age, and is interested in literature, languages and sports. She would be pleased to send a weekly paper to a soldier who is without friends. Reply to *Freda Savine*.

Carrie, living near Birmingham, interested in literature, music, and human nature, seeks a refined correspondent of the opposite sex with a view to friendship. Home or abroad.

A reader would like a girl of about 16 years of age who goes in for photography to correspond with him. Reply to *James*.

Junior Wireless Officer, Royal Naval Transport Service, would greatly appreciate a girl letter-friend

with whom he could correspond, and thus while away many lonely hours. Age about 18 years.

Those of you who want to answer any of the advertisements please note the following rules :

1. All letters must be sent under cover to *DAPHNE*, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

2. The letters which are to be forwarded must be sufficiently stamped—except in the case of readers abroad—and the names or pseudonyms of the advertisers for whom they are intended must be written upon separate slips of paper and pinned to the envelopes. Nothing should be written upon the envelopes themselves. Mention of the person for whom the letter is intended should also be made in the covering letter, in order to lessen the risk of mistakes being made.

Cathedrals and Mud Huts

The Book Prize offered to the reader who first discovered this quotation is awarded to *MARY BRAWNHILL*, whose letter, giving the correct words and their source, was received at this office on October 28th. The words come from Beatrice Harraden's novel, "Ships that Pass in the Night," and are to be found in the first paragraph of the first chapter of the book. This is the exact quotation :

"We start life thinking we shall build a great cathedral, a crowning glory to architecture, and we end by contriving a mud hut."

Very many thanks to all the other readers who wrote to tell me where to find the words. So far our "League of Help" has justified its existence!

A Literary Club

While we are talking about helping one another, I should like to draw your attention to a literary club run by *DORIS WALLER*. Appropriately enough, it is called "The Helping Hand Literary Club." It has a large number of members, but the organisers feel that they could do with more still, and they say they will be pleased to send full particulars to anybody who writes to them enclosing a penny stamp for reply. There are monthly and quarterly magazines in connection with the club, with competitions and criticism in art and literature, and altogether it sounds as though it is just the very thing for literary aspirants. If any of you feel inclined to join you had better write to *MISS WALLER*, enclosing your letters under cover to me.

Yours sincerely,

DAPHNE.

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